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MEMOIR OF LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.

WITH CRITICAL REMARKS UPON HIS WORKS.

[Concluded.]

A SHORT time before Beethoven's death, the Abbé Stadler was engaged in a controversy with Gottfried Weber, brother of the celebrated composer, respecting the authenticity of some of the passages in Mozart's Requiem. In an autograph letter of the volume before us, we find by what a powerful auxiliary the opinion of the venerable Abbé was reinforced; and we give the substance of it merely for the sake of recording Beethoven's sentiments upon Mozart, which are yet new to the musical public, and not on account of Gottfried Weber, or of any notions which he may entertain, as we confidently believe, that whenever the world may be deprived of that gentlemen, no very great vacuum will be left either in art or literature. We have omitted the musical extracts, the scrawl in which they are written not sufficiently indicating where the force of the critical objections lies.

"MOST REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

"You have indeed acted well, and done much service as well as great justice to Madame Mozart, through your very masterly and acute little work, for which I am persuaded that both the composer and the amateur, and all indeed who have interest in musical knowledge, are your debtors. There is nothing at all, or a vast deal, required in the examination of such a subject. Can Mr. Gottfried Weber, who has, as I understand, written a work on composition, attribute a passage like the following to Mozart? . . . When we consider such a passage as this of his own writing . . . Mr. G. Weber's surprising knowledge of harmony and melody reminds us of the style of the old long-deceased composers of middle Germany—Sterkel, Nûmeyer, Kalkbrenner (the father,) André, &c. . . . Requiescant in pace.

"I, in particular, my dear friend, return you sincere thanks for the pleasure your work has afforded me, having always accounted myself among the most ardent admirers of Mozart, and feeling that I shall remain so to my latest breath.

"BEETHOVEN."

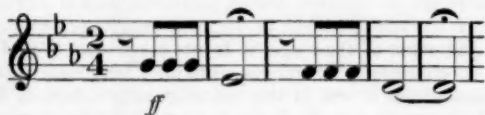
It has been justly observed by an acute German critic, that under the name of music, considered as an independent art, we should understand instrumental music only, which, free from the shackles of verse, and pure from all admixture or foreign aid, can alone express the *propre* of the art. Much of the originality and beauty of modern music is attributable to the felicitous employment of instruments; the ideas of composers keep pace with the ability of performers, and the character of its compositions for instruments is the test of the refinement of an age in musical taste. The human voice is, at best, but circumscribed

—its powers are little calculated to impel the art forward; but in instruments, there is gained, from mechanical skill and scientific research, a lever wherewith to move the world. Every improvement in modern music, nay, even that of the human organ itself, its more remarkable flexibility, and more just intonation, may be traced to the influence of instrumental composition and performance, and first in this department of music must be considered the symphony. The very name of Beethoven brings into the mind a crowd of exquisite subjects from his symphonies, which prove how firmly his fame is erected on their foundation. Under this composer and Mozart, the *adagio* attained a high vocal and sentimental character, which it certainly wanted in the earlier symphonies of Haydn—compositions abounding, indeed, in spirit, fancy, and ingenuity, but not of a kind to enrol the author among the great triumvirate; this distinction he more honorably earned, we think, in his twelve symphonies for Salomon, and his *Passione*, a series of slow movements, in which the poetical gusto of Mozart is fairly rivalled. The instrumental style demands peculiar qualifications, and admits of no mediocrity. Mozart led the way in it, and was the first to complete a model of the symphony; but his genius, all passion and voluptuous grace, though divine, is touched with too many human sympathies, and his "music, yearning like a god in pain," left much to Beethoven, who, if we would give his spirit a form and habitation, should have that face of calm, conscious power, which distinguishes the sculptured heroes and demi-gods of antiquity. As it is the characteristic of eminent composers to outstep the judgment of their age, it is not surprising to find that the excellencies of Beethoven were for a long time warmly contested; but it was in this nebulous atmosphere of England, (according to M. Fétis, most unfavorable to music,) that they were first acknowledged. Every season of the Philharmonic Society brought over new converts, and even Salomon, the personal friend of Haydn and Mozart, and who upheld their superiority with the zeal of a political partisan, was at last fairly a renegade. Beethoven's earlier symphonies—the Numbers 1 and 2, for instance—in certain passages show the composer assaying his unfledged wings; but they do not indicate the extent and boldness of his flight. In the slow movements, particularly that of the second, there is a foretaste of the delicious, indefinable emotion which possesses the hearer in the performance of his adagios; but in both, beyond the choice of an unusual time, three-eight, with here and there a characteristic transition or so, there is nothing widely differ-

ent from the physiognomy of Mozart. But in the *Pastorale*, in the symphony in B flat, in the *andante* of that in A, and last and chiefest, in the energy of that sublime production the symphony in C minor, we have pure Beethoven, and a revolution of style so complete, that by no construction possible can the ideas be attributed to other masters, or the smallest share be claimed in them. And herein is the glory of Beethoven's invention—that he followed Mozart, the musician who has made the strongest appeals to the sensibility, and by means totally *new*, attained the same end, and not less powerfully affected his hearers. To show properly the distinction of style between Mozart and Beethoven would call for a lengthened disquisition, and many citations from their works, not altogether suited to the character of this publication; but yet, avoiding technicalities, something may be said upon this subject not unworthy the amateur's attention. Under Beethoven the first movement grew more wild, and the *scherzo* (an invention, by the way, of his own) more capricious than the most playful minuet of his predecessors. In the second parts of his *allegros* he at first seems like one in a reverie, and following no settled plan; but more intimate acquaintance with his music serves to show that in the wildest of his effusions there is a prevailing order and symmetry, and that it is greatly by means of his extraordinary and fanciful episodes that his novelty is effected. He appears to deem it sufficient that the main features of a work shall be conformable to the laws of order: in artfully veiling the rest of his design, he only carries forward what Mozart began, who did not choose that the conduct of his compositions should be too palpable, or that his whole plan should reveal itself at once, and provoke no curiosity or examination. Beethoven's symphonies, notwithstanding their unintelligibility at first hearing, are really remarkable for their simplicity as well as for the roughness and grand effect of their instrumentation. It was the *style* that embarrassed musicians, most of whom have a nervous horror of committing their taste upon any thing new. They were not so well provided as that prudent lord commemorated by our English Pindar, who, wishing to know when to disapprove at the opera, took an Italian singer with him, with directions whenever he should find

"A singer's voice above or under pitch,
To touch his toe or give his arm a twitch."

And really that invaluable twitch may be excused when we find one of the most energetic *allegros* of instrumental music built out of elements like these:



for if we are moved by so simple a theme, performed by a large band, we are aware that it is contrary to all precedent, and consequently are not certain that it is correct to admire. But did not Beethoven mean by the suspense of the key in this impressive *unison*, to raise in the mind that expectation and excitement which form the fittest state for the powerful agency of music? Assuredly we think he did, and that herein also is an instance of the sublime of simplicity, which he was the first to illustrate in instrumental composition. If the reader would penetrate further into the causes of the originality of Beethoven's effects, we would refer him in brief to the frequent doubling of certain intervals of a chord, while others are left thin or wholly omitted—to the placing of notes at remarkable and unusual

distances—to the studied omission of some usual note, &c.; and we recommend him to examine, as a favorable specimen of the author's peculiarities, the introduction to the symphony in B flat. Hoffmann speaks worthily of the *andante* of the C minor symphony, when in his usual enthusiastic way he says, "Do we not seem to hear in it a divine voice discoursing to us of love and hope?" In the whole range of music there is no type of this beautiful *andante*, no, not even in Beethoven himself; the artist is no longer indebted to Haydn or Mozart, the whole movement is purely an emanation of his own feeling and fancy. There is an *andante* in A flat in a well-known symphony of Mozart, with which this is often compared. If Mozart, out of the inexhaustible store of his ideas, sustains the hearer in a more constant state of luxury, Beethoven's melodies are, perhaps, more appealing, from being employed with an exquisite cunning of simplicity, and from the attention being less occupied with constant touches of the artist. We can imagine the truth of the confession of an amateur, that the opening of one of Beethoven's symphonies at the commencement of a concert will often so much excite him, that he becomes dead to all further impressions from music for the evening—incapable of feeling anything more. The *scherzo* is not less removed from the ordinary course of experience, and is as different from the minuet and trio of Mozart, as Haydn's manner from that of Emanuel Bach. In its grotesque employment of the minor key with alternate major, we seem to be present at a village festival, witnessing the voluntary pranks and comic dances of some half-drunken clown—thunder is heard in the distance, and the sports are for a time suspended, till the *finale* bursts in it, as it were, in a flood of sunshine and of joy. The association with rural scenes and sounds is common in Beethoven—it is not only in his pastoral symphony that we hear the rich monotony of the cuckoo and the simple note of the quail, and according to the ancient mariner,

"A noise like that of a hidden brook,
In the leafy month of June,
Which to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune."

Beethoven most easily found the elevation of his ideas in the country, and he sought materials for his art in the silence and remoteness of forests and caves, by day and night, in storm and sunshine, more like a Caspar under demoniacal influence, than one who haunted those shades to commune with the awfulness of nature and his own thoughts. He loved, too, to paint the emotions with which we view the obsequies of heroes, and appears himself the last loiterer at evening in the dim cathedral cloister. Seriousness, energy and sublimity, are the characteristics of this author in the symphony, and in our opinion he has left no more perfect combination of them, and no more durable monument of his genius, than in the one in C minor. In Germany they make an affecting use of these compositions, in performing them as preludes to public solemnities, such as the annual commemoration of their great poets and other illustrious men; here we allow the spirit of them to evaporate in one vague sentiment of admiration. Our fortnightly concerts of the Philharmonic Society, however, do much, if only in preserving an exalted idea of musical expression, and giving sensations of elegance and grace to a body of persons, who again disseminate the taste they acquire; vulgarity is by this means entirely dismissed from music, Vanhall and Stamitz are doomed to eternal oblivion, and nothing but high excellence is endured. It would be far beyond the compass of

an article to speak here of many symphonies which may seem to claim notice equally with the one on which we have bestowed our principal observation, for Beethoven is entirely various. Even the symphony commemorative of the Battle of Vittoria, which had so great a run at the Drury-lane oratorios, when under the management of Sir George Smart, had some peculiar effects (owing to the disposal of the performers in the orchestra) that were never thoroughly understood in this country, and we heard an eminent foreign virtuoso say, with a quaintness that increased the amusement of his hearers, that if Beethoven had heard the manner in which Sir George allowed his music to be performed, he would have *put him in prison*; a particularly natural resolution in an Austrian composer, and of right imperial example, in a country where a slight offence and a deep dungeon are a common cause and consequence. For this symphony, Beethoven used merrily to say, he wished the king of England (to whom it was inscribed) would send him a thousand pounds of turtle; another proof of imagination which it requires a stretch of aldermanic genius to contemplate. But as the ancients thought that Apollo's cold water could never inspire good dithyrambs, by parity of supposition we imagine the ascetic musician will want unction in the symphony. The celebrated Septet was the product of the robust middle period of the author's life, and is a composition so remarkable that it can never lightly be dismissed in any notice of the progress of instrumental music; it is fortunately not a little known in private society, as forming one of the most elegant and delightful pianoforte duets that have ever been arranged from classical composition. Its melody is so captivating that it takes the ear from the very first acquaintance, yet the real author cannot be disguised; and one circumstance in particular, viz. the unusual number of movements which occupy it, fully proves with what thronging fancies Beethoven was beset in the writing, which certainly helped to produce many more movements than could be even titled on the authority of any former production. The Septet has been a great favorite at concert rooms on account of the novelty of its combination, and because it brings together and sets off to advantage the finest talent of an orchestra. And here we must be permitted to observe that the instrumental writers have not only generally signalized themselves in improvisation, which accounts for the rapidity, clearness, and connection of their thoughts, but they have been always excellent in their variations; things which in other hands are justly detested by good amateurs, their beauty being mostly in an inverse ratio to their length. There is not perhaps a surer test of genius than the power to make elegant variations, nor a greater resource to the instrumental composer; but they must be mental, not mechanical, the produce of the imagination, not what the ingenious fingers are but too apt to furnish of their own accord. Beethoven in the violin quartet and quintet, a species of chamber music now greatly cultivated in England, runs, what, in the language of sportsmen, would be termed a neck-and-neck race with Mozart. He had the advantage, be it remembered, of some twenty years the larger share of life, and died at last when his genius was declining instead of being called away in its full vigor, and stimulated by success and appreciation to higher exertions. We doubt much, if the major part of Mozart's sixteen violin quartets were thoroughly known, (which, through the inertness of performers, who like only to play such things in public as show themselves off, they are not,) whether the effect would not be very greatly to lower the opinion of Beethoven's disco-

veries in this department of musical composition. The true secret of the neglect of Mozart's compositions is their excessive difficulty, which those who play to hearers generally prefer to show off to the substance. It is but lost labour, however, to institute comparisons between such consummate masters: Beethoven, too, has passages of sentiment so exquisite and thoughts so happy, that we wonder at their discovery, and feel as if we could in a life never have the like success again, and in the luxury of listening are almost unwilling to participate our sensations with those for whom we do not feel a regard, and a conviction that they enter fully into the beauties of the composer! The art of both these authors in a *coda*, in reserving the highest interest for the close of a movement, and winding up the pleasure of the hearer to a pitch which almost borders on pain, will be acknowledged as equally characteristic of them. During the musical season of London, these quartets and quintets form a principal part of the entertainment of amateurs; yet they are not frequently understood, the difficulties of their execution being more apt to provoke the vanity of the performers, than the raciness of the compositions to excite their interest. Our professional violinists, with a great deal of tone and manual ability, are wanting in that unanimity as to the more delicate shades of an author's meaning, which produces the perfection of quartet playing, and for which the performances of the Müller family of Brunswick, and the Bohrsers of Paris, are especially remarkable. We must not omit to mention, as a characteristic of the improved taste of the age, that instrumental performances, which were formerly wont in parties to be the signal for general conversation, (as well they might be, when there was nothing better than Stamitz or Sterkel to be heard,) now find a number of attentive and even absorbed listeners.

The library of piano-forte music,* which a great composer bequeaths to posterity, must not be considered as a mere repertory of trifling amusement: the collections of Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber, constantly discover the germ of ideas which have appeared in other works in their full-blown magnificence. *Ex pede Herculem*: if the composer be able to sustain the interest of his audience in a current of noble thoughts on the pianoforte, or with a quartet of instruments, he demonstrates sheer invention, and will be only so much the more powerful when he has the advantages of a full band to give force and variety to his effects. Hoffmann, in a pleasant rhapsody which he puts into the mouth of his fictitious Kapellmeister Kreisler, indulges his own feelings, and yet contrives to balk those who would have a sneer at the enthusiasm:—

"O, Beethoven, what an impression have all thy works

* An old author, in a fine vein of humour, apostrophizes those happy sick men who have been fortunate enough to meet with his works, and truly we know no one who has soothed more languishing hours than one of our day—Sir Walter Scott. But even in the fullest health there are intervals in one's pleasures,—there is the satiety of books and the fatigue of writing, against which a resource is wanted, and which we will venture to say is found in nothing so complete as in music. The pianoforte is an instrument always at hand, and it depends neither upon friends nor upon the weather, but solely upon our own fingers. If men of intellectual occupation, who at certain times would gladly exchange their overworking thoughts for sensation, knew the complete relaxation and renovation of mind which music affords, they would all become players. We might quote the authority of Dr. Priestley on this subject, who advises literary persons, even with a bad ear, to persist in the practice of music. The philosopher might have remarked that the utterly bad ear is the anomaly in our constitution, and that if the elements of music were imbibed as a school exercise with the rudiments of grammar, there would be few who in after life would not soon be in a capacity to please themselves and others.

for the piano made upon me! How discolored and feeble does every thing appear which is not the work of thy genius, or of Mozart, or Bach! With what pleasure do I return to those admirable trios of thy opera 70, which I have played so many times! Like one who, lost in the flowery alleys of a delicious garden and surrounded by perfumes, strays on without power to extricate himself from the enchanted labyrinth, or to burst the garlands which oppose him, I penetrate deeper and deeper into the delightful sinuosities of thy works; a voice like that of the syrens draws me onward with irresistible force. I have just played from memory some of the most remarkable passages of these trios. The piano is an instrument certainly more favorable to harmony than to melody. The height of expression upon it does not give that life to a melody which it receives from the bow or the breath, and the artist contends in vain with a disadvantage of mechanism which makes the strings resound through a foreign medium. On the other hand, what instrument, except the harp, embraces like this the whole realm of harmony, and reproduces its treasures under the most varied and magnificent forms? The imagination can conceive no idea so vast as not to be produced by the fingers upon the piano. The full score, that enchanted volume, is vivified by it under the hands of a master, and in the effects of the majestic chorus and orchestra we are presented as it were with a faithful engraving from the great picture. The pianoforte is then the improvisation, for the score, for sonatas, trios, quartets, and, in short, for whatever is written in the true style, that is, in four or five real parts. But I do not conceal my aversion for pianoforte concertos; though those of Mozart and Beethoven are rather symphonies with a pianoforte *obligato*. After a majestic *tutti* of stringed and wind instruments, how meagre and wretched appears the *solo* for the piano! One admires the agility of the fingers, but of emotion there is nothing. The character of Beethoven's music banishes all those passages in which the hands appear to be running after one another, as well as all the leaps, and capricios, and notes perched up in the clouds, with which modern compositions abound. If one should consider them only as it regards the difficulty of fingering, the compositions of Beethoven have but little merit, for a moderate pianist executes them without trouble: notwithstanding more than one pretended virtuoso has thrown aside the cahier, crying out—'This passage is ungrateful!—This is unplayable!' To execute the productions of Beethoven properly, we must understand them, and penetrate into the author's intentions: let him not attempt them to whom music is but a pastime or a momentary attraction. The true artist despises and rejects all personal considerations, and every desire of vulgar applause, his only aim and hope being to reproduce in their pristine splendor those images which the conception of the master has embodied; by such means alone he endeavors to stir up the human heart, and to transport the imagination far, far from this world."

We see nothing to dissent from in the foregoing eloquent apostrophe of Mr. Kreisler, save where he is pleased to describe the fingering of Beethoven's pianoforte music as easy; the abomination of the music is that fingers can hardly be found for it. Few persons wanting the excitement and the passion of the author would play Beethoven tolerably, so entirely destitute is he of that system in the fingering, which favors the execution of other pieces. Every difficulty of performance is but comparative; Beethoven's difficulties are, however, such to good players. In his *allegros* and *finales* all is so new, so unexpected, and so abrupt, that no *studio* can smooth the way to them;

as no one dreamed of Beethoven's passages, or anticipated their employment, they are to be encountered as they best may, and if the poetic phrensy of the composer whirl us over them with scarcely a knowledge of their being executed, we have rather our own strength of feeling than the ease of the composition to thank. Here we might have a good opportunity to inveigh against the *finger-music* now in fashion, and to exclaim, with Weber, that he who composes at the pianoforte is but the child of poverty, for so accustomed are the fingers to wander in their old tracks, that to trust to them is to sacrifice all vigor and originality. Beethoven pursued beauty in the abstract; he considered nothing of convenience in the means of producing it; hence his difficulty, and at the same time his originality.

That this master in his latter years, probably as he felt the waning of his youthful powers, carried the caprice which was in some measure peculiar to his style to an unusual excess is unquestionable, and we have authority for the assertion in his last symphony, with chorus, which occupies in performance one hour and twenty minutes, and wears out the patience and the faculties of every person who attempts to listen to it. Probably the author's deafness* may have tended to such mental concentration, as to enable him to see the connection in a design of much greater extent than is within the scope of ordinary mortals; but we know the opinion of musicians respecting this work is, that he has raised so huge a pile that the eye cannot take in its proportions. He was writing for Titans, not for human pigmies. Again, in his posthumous mass, and set of quartets, of which the most learned audiences have not been able to discover whether they have a meaning or not, we may discover a mind brooding over more ambitious designs, and deviating yet more extraordinarily from the common track. Some have surmised that the protracted calamity of the author had unsettled his notion of the connection and relation of sounds; but we know not how such an opinion can be tenable, when it is remembered that he was in the constant practice of writing; and though by appealing to the eye and mind alone he might have gradually accustomed himself to tolerate greater dissonances, or *hardnesses*, than his ear would willingly have borne in its acute state, we do not see how his principles could have become unfixed without reducing his compositions to a chaotic confusion, which is certainly no where to be found.

A kindred spirit of grandeur made Beethoven the idolater of Handel,† and that desire to arrest the hearer by some powerful thought, which Haydn, speaking of the latter, termed his striking like a thunderbolt, is equally observable in the symphonies of the one, as the oratorios of the other. Mozart's genius, on the contrary, less astonishing, but always flowing on in one deep current of feel-

* After Beethoven became completely deaf, when he would try over a new quartet, he used to sit and watch the performers with intense earnestness, and by this means judge whether they understood his composition or not.

† Let us here be allowed to mention with honor an instance of liberality and good taste in an amateur. M. Stumpf, the harp maker of Great Portland street, who is an enthusiastic admirer of good music, and who possesses the valuable MS. of a set of quartets by Mozart, became, during a sojourn in Vienna, the friend and companion of Beethoven. On his return to England he became anxious to send some token of his remembrance of the happy hours he had passed with his illustrious friend; and he hit upon an idea which every one will envy. It was to send a complete and costly set of Handel's Works to the composer, with the precaution that it should be set down in his chamber free of all expense. This was actually put in execution, and we may imagine what were Beethoven's feelings—between the value of the present itself, and the rare enthusiasm of the giver.

ing, assimilates more strongly to that of Bach. The Mount of Olives, in spite of the fine things it contains, the admirable instrumental introduction, and the Hallelujah chorus, a complete specimen of grandeur in modern choral music, will, on the whole, be considered a failure. Its character is too monotonous, and the attention is fatigued by the length to which movements of one peculiar expression are extended: this fault is for the most part attributable to the subject. The last chorus indeed produces something fresh; but there are few hearers of the entire oratorio that do not hail it joyfully, because it is the last. An age of instrumental improvement like the present is little favorable to the development of that simple grandeur, which is the prominent characteristic of the oratorio style; the beauty and refinement now sought in the use of instruments rob the voices of a force, which every one acknowledges in the composition of the ancient authors. The more music depends upon the accompaniment, the more it is exposed to the fluctuations of taste, which the discovery of new instruments continually modifies, and thus often renders preceding efforts old fashioned and unbearable. Oratorios are no longer the first order of musical composition; their finest qualities, being found in the elements of the science, naturally fell to the lot of the earliest masters, and the second-hand simplicity of our own times is so lightly valued, as to be looked upon as little better than so much quotation. The Ambrosian and Gregorian chants have outlived a hundred revolutions in the employment of instruments—their immortality is secure; but he who would attempt to revive such a style now, would stand a poor chance of gaining admirers or making proselytes. A composer may advance as much as he will beyond his age; but if he return to the manner of antiquity, his productions will be received with scorn, as at once deficient in invention, and insulting to the acquirements of his contemporaries; the genius of the artist, if he would enjoy success, must, therefore, be moulded by circumstances. Perhaps the most striking instance of a modern oratorio, based upon the ancient simplicity, yet original, is Mehul's Joseph. It may enforce the reason just hazarded upon the degeneracy of this class of composition, that the best scriptural stories have been ransacked by Handel, and that the authors who now put together these pieces for composers are generally not masters of their craft, nor always aware that the music requires both dramatic interest, and a plan artfully constructed, so as to place the various movements in relief. But if the oratorio style was somewhat disadvantageous to Beethoven, a fine field was open to him in the composition of masses, where his abundant fancy and mastery in the use of instruments might have had the fullest scope. The mass has been set and reset so often, and with so much license, by the whole tribe of composers, as to partake at last more of the instrumental than the vocal character of expression; the voices are frequently used as instruments, and the composer, satisfied that his work bears some general relation to the text, gives himself up to his imagination, and is by turns grave or joyous, tender or animated, as the inclination takes him. Indeed, some composers have freely abandoned all thought of the words, and none more grossly than the good Catholic Haydn, many of whose *Kyrie eleïsons* partake more of the character of a jig than of religious supplication. Two masses are the whole of the church music of Beethoven known in the English amateur circles—the first in C, for its extreme beauty and originality, without a misplaced note from beginning to end—the second in D, a posthumous work, so replete with difficulties, such a complicated and astound-

Vol. I.

10—18

ing score, that it stands a good chance of never being heard, and hitherto has met with a signal failure wherever it has been attempted. We know of one musical party in London got up for the express purpose of trying this composition, at which the conductor suddenly dashed down the score, candidly avowing that he could make nothing of it, and that in fact it was "the blind leading the blind." It is worthy of note, that this work, which contains some of the profoundest harmonic combinations, and at the same time so new as to require the nicest ear as a test, was the product of the deafest part of the author's life, and proves that by some extraordinary mental process he must have judged of the union of sounds that he not only could not hear, but could never have heard! As a dramatic composer nothing is known of Beethoven in London, except through certain extracts from *Fidelio*, which have been executed at the Philharmonic and other concerts; they convey a high idea of the character of the work, but leave its stage effect to conjecture. More dramatic works might have fallen from Beethoven, for during the presidency of Waters over the King's Theatre, the composer commissioned a friend to treat with him for an engagement in London, with such offers of service as could not fail to have been readily accepted by any one sensible of the advantage of possessing such a composer, and with spirit enough to propose honorable terms; the offer made by Waters was, however, so contemptible, that the negotiation was indignantly broken off. The wish expressed by Beethoven arose more from the uneasiness of his situation abroad, where he was harassed by the movements of hostile armies, than from any violent affection for the dramatic style, in which, had he felt much inclination, he might have been easily gratified. We are not among those who lament over misapplied talent, being of opinion that men are the carvers of their own fortunes, and for the most part do what they are intended to do.

The first impulse on hearing of the calamities of celebrated authors is, to exclaim how much more might have been expected from them had their course of life run smoothly! but it is extremely doubtful, in the cases of Mozart and Beethoven, whether the poverty of the one, by compelling him to write, and the deafness of the other, by excluding communication with the outward world, and constraining him to be original, have not greatly benefited posterity. If the musician demur to the poverty, he will, at least, allow that the idea of an eternal silence surrounding the great composer is gratifying to the imagination; and, doubtless, Beethoven, amid the surrounding dumbness of nature, heard melodies more sweet than ever met the sensual ear. Has he not in his lonely forest walks surprised Pan and the wood nymphs, and peopled the solitudes about Vienna with shapes and sounds more than human? The cravings of the purse, constraining Mozart to write, compelled him to leave fine things to posterity, for it was impossible that he could do anything bad;—instead of descending to the popular taste, he brought it many degrees nearer to himself. With the noblest ideas of the character of an artist, Mozart could not be indifferent to fame, or fearful of the "laborious days" and self denial that lead to it. A great musician and a fine extemporaneous performer is perhaps the most easily excusable for doing little. By nature luxurious and social, and carrying about with him a talent which makes him the admiration of every circle into which he falls, inventing and putting his ideas into execution at once, himself revelling in what he does, and receiving the rapturous acknowledgments of his delighted hearers,—such a life cannot be easily quitted, to encounter the

tedious business of writing the thoughts, for solitude, meditation, and dreams of posthumous fame. This is to enjoy "the future in the instant," and to anticipate the verdict of posterity; such were Mozart and Beethoven's triumphs, and so easily were they earned, that under the favorable circumstances of life, they might have squandered all their treasures of thought and beauty; as it is, we are convinced that nothing they have left behind equals what in these moments has been heard and forgotten. It may be truly affirmed of composition, *c'est le premier pas qui coute*; once fairly engaged in it, the composer enters into the pleasure of his work; but there is a pleasure too, in playing, which none but the player knows. What hidden delight there is in the contact of the delicate ivory; by what invisible train of nerves a certain joy is diffused through the whole body, and how the sensorium, the finger-tips, and the feet are influenced by one common sympathy, it were vain to inquire; but the true lover of music feels all this in the performance of a beautiful movement, and if thus a common mortal, what must have been the excitement of a Mozart, or a Beethoven? Theirs are the emotions that make sleepless eyes, and a brain overworking with thought, until the imagination becomes a torment; and unless Providence by some fortunate accident put it out of their power to repeat the too intoxicating draught of beauty, make them drop into the grave in the prime of life, from sheer bodily exhaustion. Thus we prematurely lost a Mozart, and, but for his obtuse ear, might have lost a Beethoven. Artists are, in the end, often gainers by events which seem to them the bitterest misfortunes, and we even go so far as to think that the state of placid security and competence, so much extolled by visionaries as favorable to contemplation and great works, only serves to dull the wits; while all the energy of genius is often roused by obstacles, and stimulated by adversity.

It only remains for us to speak of Beethoven as a player, and this we can the more readily do, as the authentic testimony of judges is still to be obtained. In companies, where the finest players executed the finest set compositions, when Beethoven sat down to the pianoforte to conjure up something upon the spur of the moment, he was sure to throw all who had played before him into the shade. His fertile fancy, and the impetuosity of his temperament, rendered him a prodigy, and his performance was of a nature to stagger the faith of those present, even though they saw and heard. In his poetic fury at the piano, he elicited combinations of the most complicated difficulty, and executed passages which he would have shrunk from attempting in cold blood. Nor was it only surprise that excited his hearers—they were carried away by the strangeness and beauty of his fancies. The style of some of his pianoforte productions may give an idea of his *extempore* playing, though nothing written by him can equal the ideas fresh from his own brain, executed by himself. Difficulties stimulated him, and he loved those who dared them; he took an affection to Ferdinand Ries, his pupil, for venturing an extraordinarily difficult cadence in public, and coming out of it successfully. With all this he had but small hands, and a manner of execution which would be deemed inferior to that of some pianoforte teachers. But what cannot love accomplish? It is this devotion to her, and enthusiasm in her service, indicative of a simple nature, and inconsistent with personal vanity, avarice, or envy, the usual vices of artists, which the Muse never fails to reward with her choicest gifts. Whatever may have been its influence upon the character, if any, while music was more allied to mathematic calculation

than to poetical feeling, we are certain that since with the moderns it has been elevated into a matter of sentiment, the lives of the great masters have furnished some chapters in the history of our nature, which redound not less to the praise of music than to the honor of humanity.

[From the *Révue Musicale*.]

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE PIANOFORTE AND OF PIANISTS.

FROM the very origin of music among civilized nations, it has been remarked, that the talent of the instrumental performer is always in a ratio with the state of insufficiency or perfection of the instruments which he employs; and that the history of the one is inseparable from that of the other. This observation is particularly applicable to the pianoforte and to pianists; for the mechanism of the key, upon which the artist's perfection of talent depends, is a natural consequence of the more or less perfect state of the instrument. It is sufficient to compare the ancient spinnet with a good pianoforte from the manufactories of Paris, Vienna, or London, to be convinced that the manner of playing these instruments is altogether different. In the former, the jack, furnished at one end with a quill, pressed upon the string, which resounded only when the quill, having the effect of a spring, was bent by the pressure of the finger upon the key, and escaped with a bound, by means of which the string was brought into vibration. The sound produced by means like these, was that of a string struck by a hard and dead body; hence it was impossible to obtain gradations of sound—of either the piano, the forte, the *legato*, the *rinforzando*, the *smorzando*, or the like. The key always required to be struck with force, because an effort was necessary to produce the sound. How wide the difference between these contrivances, and the easy keyboard of our pianofortes, of those hammers acting without difficulty, and with rigorous precision, on their finely-wrought pivots, impelled by levers of admirable suppleness, and at will either striking the string with force, or touching it with the greatest gentleness! Every thing is easy upon an instrument offering such resources; the fingers acquire agility, because they encounter no obstacle; the well-organized artist expresses with facility the finest shades of the feelings by which he is actuated, because the shades of sound produced by his instrument are inexhaustible; in a word, his execution is full of variety, because the pianoforte which he uses affords him abundant scope for producing it. Pianists are so far under the influence of the qualities or defects of the instruments on which they exercise their talents, that the Germans, accustomed to the light mechanism of the pianoforte of Vienna, are generally found to possess a more brilliant and more easy execution than the French or English, whose instruments being more energetic and heavy, have, till now, afforded a more vigorous, but less brilliant style of playing.

I purpose to examine by what succession of improvements the manufacturers of instruments have succeeded in bringing the pianoforte to the state of perfection to which it has attained, and of the revolutions of style, and of the mechanism of the keys of this instrument, which have been the result.

It has been asserted by all those who have treated of the origin of the *clavichord*, or, more properly speaking, of stringed instruments with key boards, that no traces of the existence of the harpsichord or spinnet are to be found anterior to the sixteenth century. It is true, that no exact description is to be found previous to that period;

but Boccaccio, who wrote his *Decamerone* about the year 1350, makes mention of a *cembalo* for accompanying the voice. Some persons have expressed a doubt as to this *cembalo* being the harpsichord, afterwards known under that name in Italy, and have imagined that an instrument of the same species as the *cymbalum* of the ancients was intended; that is to say, an instrument of percussion. This is not likely; for the use of small portable organs, and stringed instruments, had been so widely spread during the thirteenth century, as is seen in illuminated MSS., and music had made such progress in Italy in the time of Boccaccio, that it is not probable they would, under the circumstances related in the romance, have accompanied the voice with an instrument of percussion. If it were permitted me to venture a conjecture in this regard, I should rather think that the instrument spoken of by Boccaccio was the *tympanum* (the *timpano* of the Italians,) which is still to be occasionally seen in the hands of itinerant musicians, and which consists of a rectangular chest, in which is a sounding board, surmounted by a bridge mounted with wire or catgut strings. The player strikes these strings with two small sticks, hooked at the end, forming a harmony in two parts, and, if skilful, even executing passages of some difficulty. To the various mechanical means afterwards devised, in order to obtain substitutes for these sticks, we are doubtless indebted for the origin of stringed instruments with a key board.

There existed in Rome, about sixty years since, a clavichord, furnished with twenty-five keys, without any difference of form for the sharps or flats, and which had the appearance of being one of the first essays made in the fabrication of keyed instruments. It was then affirmed that it had been brought from Greece to Rome in the time of Julius Cesar; such an opinion has no need of refutation. M. Hullmandel also speaks of another clavichord* which existed in the same city, the body, table, and bridges of which were of white marble. This instrument had doubtless formed part of some monument; the date of 650 assigned it, was altogether ridiculous. Zarlino speaks of a spinnet, the relics of which existed in his time (1555,) and which appeared to have been made about 150 years previous. The testimony of so learned a musician is undeniable, and is, moreover, in accordance with what is known relative to certain celebrated artists of the fourteenth century, such as Francesco degli Organi, Nicolo del Proposto, Jacopo da Bologna, and some others, who were not only skilful organists, but also distinguished themselves on keyed instruments, as is seen in the pages of the Italian writers of the fifteenth century. These instruments must, therefore, have existed at that period. Again, nothing more clearly proves the existence of the harpsichord or spinnet of the fourteenth century, or at latest of the beginning of the fifteenth, than the manner in which they are spoken of by those who gave descriptions of these instruments in the early part of the sixteenth century. They do not speak of them as new inventions, and the varieties which they mention demonstrate, in the clearest manner, that they could be the result only of multiplied essays, dating from times already long gone by. The least attention to the slow manner in which discoveries and improvements were made, in so backward a state of civilization as that of these first periods of the birth of the arts, will convince us that instruments of so complicated a kind, could not start forth at once from the brain of such inventors as those described by the writers of the sixteenth century.

* See the article CLAVECIN in the Encyclopedie Methodique, under the head Music.

From all that we can learn by tradition, it seems probable that the clavichord was invented by the Italians about the year 1300, and that it was afterwards imitated by the Belgians and Germans. The invention of this instrument must necessarily have preceded that of all others of the keyed kind, as being the most simple and most analogous with the *timpano*, of which we have just spoken. It was of a square form, and mounted with a single string only for each tone, and its mechanism consisted of a small tongue of copper attached perpendicularly to the key, below the string upon which it was intended to act. The greatest inconvenience in the construction of the clavichord was, that of the tongue of copper being fastened to the key; for the metal tongue, thus fixed, remained upon the string as long as the finger was upon the key, so that unless the player took off his finger the instant the string had been struck, this tongue intercepted the vibrations of the string. Another defect in this mode of eliciting sound without elasticity, was that of forcing the string for a moment from its level, and by this momentary derangement, of raising its intonation. Yet, notwithstanding these defects, the clavichord continued long in use in Germany, on account of the simplicity of its construction, of its low price, and the convenience of its form, for they had contrived to make its sounding chest of several divisions, which could be shortened or lengthened at pleasure, so as to carry the instrument under the arm. In his first musical journeys, Mozart played upon a clavichord, which formed part of his baggage.

On an attentive examination of the music for keyed instruments, composed by the most ancient artists, we shall remark a very perceptible analogy between the multitude of ornaments with which it is overloaded, and the nature of the clavichord itself. Sustained sounds not being capable of execution on this instrument, it was found necessary to supply their place by simple and double trills, roulades, and a thousand similar things, with which the works of Diruta, of Antonio degli Organi, Gabrieli, Bernard Schmidt, Claude Merulo, and Frescobaldi are full. The great art of playing the clavichord consisted in lifting up the fingers as promptly as possible, and of running lightly over the keys, rather than forcibly pressing on them. The music composed for this instrument by Francesco degli Organi, Nicolo del Proposto, and Jacopo da Bologna, not having reached us, it is impossible to form a just idea of it, otherwise than by analogy with that of their successors. Among these, one of the most ancient, and of the greatest celebrity, was Antonio Squarcialupi, surnamed *Antonio degli Organi*. He was organist in the cathedral of Florence, and lived in the reign of Lorenzo il Magnifico, about the year 1450. His pieces have not been printed; but Antonio Francisco Doni informs us, that he possessed more than ten volumes of *tablatures* for the organ, clavichord, and luth, composed by Antonio di Bologna (*Squarcialupi*), Julio de Modena, Francesco da Milano, and Giacomo da Busi. The reputation of Squarcialupi was such, that after his death a bust to his honor was erected in the cathedral of Florence, with an inscription in which his merits were celebrated in very flattering terms.

André Gabrieli was one of the most celebrated composers of the sixteenth century, and renowned as an organist of merit. He lived at Venice, and was named organist to St. Mark's. In his works are found some of the most ancient variations (known at this period by the name of *diminution*) to a subject, with rapid and brilliant harmonic traits.

Among the most able performers on the clavichord of

the fifteenth century, we may class Gabrielli Fattorini, Claudio Merulo, organist to the Duke of Ferrara and the cathedral of Venice, Francesco Corteccia, and Alessandro Striggio. Their works, like those of the organists named above, consist in *ricercari* on the themes of madrigals or celebrated motets, in variations to French or Italian songs, and in dances more or less ornamented. Some collections of these compositions have reached us, and confirm the observation made upon the analogy of style then in use, to the nature of the instrument in question.

The number of other organists and players on the clavichord who distinguished themselves at this epoch is very considerable. Among the most remarkable we may cite Paul Hoffhaimer, born at Radstat, in Stiria, and who was knighted by the emperor Maximilian; Johann Buchner of Constance; Johann Kotter of Berne; Conrad of Spire; Schachinger, organist at Padua; Johann von Cologne, in Saxony; Melchior Neysidler, Valentin Greff, Enrico Rodesca da Foggia of Turin; Bindella of Treviso; Vittorio of Bologna; Guilio Cesare Barbeta of Padua; Claudio de Corregio, André de Canareggio, Paolo de Castello, and Alessandro Milleville.

The clavichord does not appear to have been introduced into France, nor does the history of music make mention of any French performer on that instrument of the fifteenth century.

When the defects inherent in the construction of the clavichord were discovered, a plan was devised of striking the strings with small pieces of quill affixed to minute springs, adjusted in the upper part of small flat pieces of wood, termed *jacks*. These jacks were directed perpendicularly upon the key, and when the spring had made its escape, after the string had been struck, the jack fell in such a manner as to be able to reproduce anew the sound at will. A slip of cloth applied to each side of the jack had the effect of a damper in stopping the vibration.

This new invention was applied to two instruments, which differed only in form; the one was the *virginal*, the chest of which was rectangular, like that of small pianofortes; the other was the *spinet*, which had the form of a harp laid in a horizontal position. These instruments were much in vogue towards the close of the sixteenth century, but were soon surpassed, both in respect to volume of sound and variety of effects, by the *harpsichord*.

In the spinnet and virginal there was but one string for each tone; two were added to the harpsichord, the form of which was nearly the same as that of our grand horizontal pianofortes. The mechanism of the jack remained the same as in the spinnet. At length Hans Ruckers of Antwerp effected an important reform in this instrument. He was originally a joiner; but, quitting that business, devoted himself entirely to the construction of harpsichords, and gained a reputation in that way, which was surpassed by no other. He gave this instrument a more powerful and connected sound, by joining to the two strings in unison, a third range of shorter and finer strings, tuned to the upper octave of the others, and which could be entoned at pleasure, either together with them, or separately. He mounted his harpsichords partly with catgut strings, and partly with steel wire. In imitation of the organ, he added a second key board to his instruments, the object of which was to allow three strings to be heard at once, or only a single one at pleasure. In fine, he extended the compass of his harpsichord to four complete octaves (from C to C,) by adding four grave sounds to the forty five which existed before.

[To be continued in our next.]

[From "Elements of Vocal Science."]

ON STYLE AND MANNER.

WE are naturally affected by sounds, and various passions and emotions are excited by means of our sense of hearing, independently of the association attached to words. Mr. Burke has observed that great or sudden or tremulous sounds produce emotions of the sublime, and he quotes the effects of soft and sweet sounds in music, as causes of the beautiful. [Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful, sec. 25, part 3.] To unite these effects of sound with the impressions conveyed by language, and by their conjoint influence to heighten those impressions, is the primary object of the art of singing. We find in the works of every composer, often in the melody itself, but more frequently in the accompaniments, imitations of natural sounds, which are, however, in subservience to certain laws by which the ear seems to be governed, but which in truth have been formed by a long and accurate observation of those sounds and changes which the ear has been perceived to receive with pleasure. Hence arises the various degrees of loud and soft, of slow or rapid movements, and of sudden breaks, which are supposed to indicate particular passions, affections, and emotions, and which come at last by their association with words, really to figure such images to the mind.* "There are," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "in art

* A judicious author says, "It may be proper to point out, on what foundation a simple melody is more pathetic than a complex and artificial one. 1st. In the expression of the passions. Nature doth not offer musical sounds to the human ear. For though the natural tones of grief and joy (the two passions which are the most effectually expressed by music,) approach nearer to musical precision than any other, yet still they are in a certain degree inconcinnous and unmusical. 2d. As the tones of the passions are in some degree unmusical, so they are generally more simple in their composition or succession than the tones which are commonly employed to form a regular melody. From the first of the remarks it follows, that all musical expression of the passions must be imperfect, for the musical sounds not being found in nature, if the artist strictly imitates the sounds he hears, they will be unmusical, and the imitations defective. The imagination has a power of imposing its impressions on reason in a certain degree. This we find at a proper representation of a tragedy, where though the scenery, the persons, the dresses, the composition, and other accompanying objects, are not a precise transcript from nature, though the imitation be defective yet it is still highly affecting. But if the representation departs from nature beyond a certain degree, nature then revolts, and the affecting power is lost. And thus musical imitation, though imperfect in a certain degree, still boasts this power. If imperfect beyond a certain degree, its affecting power is lost. But as it follows from the second remark, that the farther musical sounds depart from simplicity, the farther they depart from nature; so the consequence is clear, that simple melody, though an imperfect imitation, may be pathetic, while a complex and artificial melody (by departing from nature beyond a certain degree) will entirely lose its affecting power. This naturally leads to the consideration of a mysterious circumstance which lies yet unaccounted for at the very foundation of musical expression. The fact is this, that musical sounds which are employed to express passion (as grief or joy) by an imperfect imitation, are more affecting than the natural or perfect voice of these passions when given without musical intonations. It seems not easy to assign a clear and sufficient cause for these appearances. Let the following conjectures have what weight they may:— 1st. Have not musical sounds a mechanical power over the human frame by which they awaken it into a higher degree of sensibility and sympathy than it possesseth in its more cool and torpid state? 2d. Are we not generally so constituted as to sympathize much more strongly with those in whom we find amiable qualities than their opposites? And as pity melts the soul to love, so doth not love melt the soul to pity? 3d. Doth not a sweet voice, like a fine countenance, create a strong prejudice in favor of its possessor, and induce a belief of amiable inherent qualities? 4th. May not the voice and figure of a distressed or joyous object be so horrid or uncouth, ridiculous or ugly, as in a great measure to lessen if not totally to destroy the sympathy of those who hear and see it? If these observations be true, then by carrying the voice of expressions

fluctuating as well as fixed principles." These are commonly among the characteristics of national taste, and they also serve to mark the changes which time and the intercourse with other countries produce. To these combinations of nature and art, we may attribute the rise, the progress, and the present state of singing.

It must not however be forgotten, that this art is less reconcilable to nature than others. Poetry and painting are referable only to nature, with an allowance which the mind readily gives to the *beau ideal*, or to the standard of imaginary beauty. Our admiration of the poet or the painter is guided by the *resemblance* which his productions bear to nature; of this, every man is in a degree a judge. In singing, art has departed so widely from the primitive expression of natural passion, that there is little which affords an object of comparison. In this department of musical science, taste* therefore depends much more upon cultivation than in any other art, since the graces of singing are almost entirely factitious; many of those most in esteem are valuable only for their difficulty in execution, and the labor and practice they consequently imply; and many are such as an untaught ear would condemn as absurd: but that singing is consonant to nature in the degree that it is really good, I believe to be demonstrated by that universal testimony which the general approbation of a numerous and mixed audience never fails to bestow. The proximate causes of this almost unerring criterion appear to be the articulate pronunciation, and the pure tone which are constituents of excellence, and which every one is capable of distinguishing. This principle will be further established when we come to treat separately of the several parts of vocal performance.

It appears then that singing has one uniform object, viz. the exciting various emotions by the union of sentiment and sound. To accomplish this end, the art arranges itself into various divisions. The most natural arrangement would appear to arise out of the class of emotions to which the song is addressed, and from hence it immediately strikes us that the word "style," which is commonly used as applicable to the singer, in point of fact is applicable only to the composition, and that "manner" is the most accurate term we can adopt to signify the power of expression that belongs to the performer. The word "*manner*," however, has hitherto been commonly taken in a bad sense, and connected (particularly in the drama and in painting) with the personification of the quality, in the term "*mannerist*," by which has been signified, one who too constantly repeats his own peculiar mode of imitation in the one art and of handling in the other. Thus by the adoption of the term *style* we are in danger of confounding principles, and if we rather choose the word *manner* we incur the hazard of entailing a certain portion of the contempt from the use which custom has already associated with such a distinction in art.

Sir Joshua Reynolds has divided the labors of the painter into the study of a great style and an ornamented style, and perhaps it is not easy to find a classification that better suits the fine arts in general. Poetry and music are both not only susceptible of the same arrangement, but perhaps no other can be considered as so plain and inarti-

of grief or joy into sweeter tones and higher degrees of melody than they possess in nature, yet still preserving the resemblance so far as not to destroy probability, may we not, on the principles here given, create a higher degree of affection and sympathy than the natural voice of the passions can give?

* That faculty or those faculties of the mind which form a judgment of the works of imagination and the elegant arts.—BURKE ON THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

VOL. I.

19

ficial. In poetry, grandeur and simplicity of ideas and expression may be said to constitute the great style. The definition will hold likewise in painting and in music, while the same loose arrangement and wandering flow of thought and expression which distinguish the ornamented style, will alike apply to them all. Led by this analogy, I shall then venture, notwithstanding the objections above stated, to use the terms *style* and *manner* relatively to singing, in the acceptance they have obtained.

It is scarcely possible completely to describe in what the great style consists. In a singer it asks a combination of all the faculties of the mind and graces of execution which address themselves to and command the higher feelings of nature. The elements of this style are power, pure tone, and a varied expression, an entire command of manner, correct taste and perfect simplicity, or in other words, that genuine sensibility and that intellectual dignity which enable us to embody in their finest forms the conceptions of the poet and the composer, and to employ in the best manner the powers of nature and of the art.

The difficulty of reaching this degree of eminence, combined with other causes which have been enumerated in my former letter, has originated a style intended to supply the place of the great style. This we may term the ornamented style. It consists in the substitution of light, graceful, florid, and surprising passages of execution for the pure, dignified, or impassionate notes which compose the melody of songs in the great style.* However improbable it may appear at the first glance, a close examination will convince us, that the most difficult *graces* as they are called, are more easily acquired than the chaste and austere elements of the great style. Ornaments well performed are apt to seduce our senses by the seeming difficulty of execution, and we are led away by novelty,† by wonder and surprise‡ at what perhaps we never conceived practicable; the emotion rises with the rank of the performer, we give credit for more value than there really is, and take it upon the trust of his personal reputation. The judgment is thus silenced, while the ear is filled with new, agreeable, and unexpected sounds. But we are influenced only by an emotion of surprise—the affections are never engaged. To satisfy ourselves that these ornaments are more easy of acquisition than the great style, we have only to recollect that they are attained by mere repetition, by a vast number of acts, and imply no mental exertion whatever. The great style is therefore to the ornamented, relatively, what the productions of reason and the imagination are to the agile exertions of the body. That such is the principle is clearly shown by the title which the Italians have given to this species of performance—*aria d'agilita*.§

* The most perfect instance of the great style is Handel's "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" of the ornamented Guglielmi's "Gratias agimus tibi," one of Catalani's most favorite songs of agility.

† Novelty, wherever found, whether in a quality or action, is the cause of wonder; admiration is directed to the person who performs any thing wonderful.—LORD KATIMES' ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM.

‡ The Emperor Charles V. told Farinelli that he neither moved nor stood still like any other mortal. Those gigantic strides, said he, those never-ending notes and passages, only surprise, and it is now time for you to please: you are too lavish of the gifts with which nature has endowed you; if you wish to reach the heart, you must take a more plain and simple road. These few words brought about an entire change in his manner.—BURNEY'S STATE OF MUSIC IN ITALY, page 207.

§ English music can scarcely be said to have any comic style. The Italian Buffo, besides being a comedian, is a sound musician; he must possess considerable knowledge and facility; we have scarcely any music of the kind that deserves a comment. Our opera of Tom Thumb is a ludicrous exception enough. The

It follows, then, that the *manner* of a singer must very much depend upon the style which he adopts, and his choice must necessarily be guided by the talents with which nature has fitted him; but since cultivation can do so much for the mere voice, perhaps the range of a performer must be determined rather by the faculties of the mind than by any power or facility of execution; these being but secondary considerations.* Experience shows us that scarce any one singer, of whatever eminence, has risen to the top of his art in more than one style. Indeed there are causes which render the possession of a diversity of talents almost impossible. Like judgment and wit, the powers which constitute the one destroy the other. The mind must be directed and confined to one pursuit. I would therefore here only recommend the student to fix his first attention on the great style, to study principles, and to form as correct and pure a taste as possible; for if nature should have denied him those powers which are necessary to maintain the highest rank, he will descend to any subordinate station with advantages not commonly enjoyed by those with whom he is to contend; while on the contrary, if he be too much employed in the practice of the mechanical parts of the art, he will become attached by habit to inferior excellences, and can never elevate his mind to the contemplation of the accomplishments that are the most truly desirable of attainment. Certain qualities are requisite to the perfection of every style. These will be detailed at large when we speak of the natural and acquired powers which constitute a singer. In the division of this title, I purpose not to enumerate the particular faculties which are essential to each, but to lay down the principles of them all, which are alike, and differ only in degree.

Mr. Brown, in his work on the structure of the Italian opera, has endeavored to class the different parts of such a performance according to sentiments;† but without going into a too minute refutation of his opinion, I must enter my dissent to his classifications, as too general for practical purposes among English singers, and not suited to the circumstances which accompany our concerts. In Italy the division of musical labor is more complete than among ourselves, and the duty which devolves upon public singers less complicated. Our English performers of eminence have sometimes been called upon to sing in the church, the theatre, the orchestra, and the chamber, and it is their con-

stant task to study and to execute in the concerts of London and at provincial meetings, compositions selected from anthems, from oratorios, and from operas, indeed from the writings of all masters of all nations and in all styles. The serious singer of the foreign opera is rarely called upon to exert his talents in any other place than upon the stage, and still more rarely in any other composition than an opera song. Hence there is not only at present a greater command of style and of manner required in an English singer, but also a modification depending upon the place in which his powers are exercised. For this reason I shall class the style and manner according to the place in which the performance is held, and which so considerably affects the mode of singing, that I am not sure whether the adoption of such a classification may not be found more perfect than that according to sentiment, for the intensity of the expression of the sentiment depends much upon the place. It is true that in an oratorio we meet with light, and in an opera grand compositions; but nevertheless they are tinted, as it were, in their expression, by the place and the occasion. The church is opened only for religious services; in the theatre we are excited to various emotions; the orchestra admits of a more universal range than either, yet reduced in fervency below the church, and raised by dignity above the theatre. All these derive from their public nature a peculiar character, while the music of the chamber, on the contrary, like the intercourses of private life, and like the finer charities of domestic affection, is most familiar, but most chastened and most refined; yet they all recur to the same grand principle. Considering then the great and the ornamented styles as the leading distinctions of the art, and regarding manner as something peculiar and proper to the individual performer in its exercise, I shall in my next letter go on to discuss the modifications which arise from place, under the titles of the Church, the Orchestra, the Theatre, and the Chamber.

most beautiful airs are adapted to the vilest words. Hasse's famous song "Pallido il sole," which Farinelli sung every night for ten years to Philip V. of Spain, is put into the mouth of the ghost of Gaffer Thumb.

* It must however be understood, that whenever the art is spoken of with a view to the public exercise of talent, a given quantity of ability from nature is presupposed, since it would be absurd for a person of confined voice to think of pursuing singing as a profession. The instances of young people who are misled by the partiality of friends to the attempt, are numberless, and often exceedingly ridiculous. I remember the late Dr. A. having been engaged in a correspondence with a lady in Ireland, who wished to be ushered into the musical world under his protection, and, according to her letter, Madame Mara could not be expected to surpass her;—she could sing every thing. The lady accordingly came to England; but, upon hearing her sing, the Doctor, with his accustomed honesty, exclaimed, "Madam, you must go back to Ireland; for, by God, unless you and I were shut up in a band box together, I could not hear you."

About the same time a person who had lavished an enormous sum in Italy upon the musical education of his wife, brought her to Dr. A. for lessons. The Doctor very candidly told him that the lady had no ear; she sung too sharp, and that nothing could be done. This was a severe stroke upon one who aspired to become the Prima Donna at the opera. The Doctor's opinion was however verified by the public judgment, for I saw her advertised afterwards at Sadler's Wells or the Circus, in the ensuing winter.

† See the next Article.

[Extract from Mr. Brown's work, referred to in the preceding Article.]

ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE ITALIAN OPERA.

MR. BROWN'S distinctions are so philosophical and so just, that we subjoin some extracts from and an analysis of the most interesting parts of his work.

The music of the opera is divided into Recitative and Air, and the Recitative is classed under two denominations—*simple* and *accompanied*.

The simple recitative is appropriated to passages of narration or of dialogue that are devoid of passion or sentiment, and such as by their own nature can never become the subject of musical expression.

The accompanied recitative is on the contrary entirely devoted to passion. It was very justly observed, that "passages in which the mind of the speaker is agitated by a rapid succession of various emotions, are incompatible with any particular strain or length of melody; for that which constitutes such a particular strain is the relation of several parts to one whole. Now it is this whole which the Italians distinguish by the name of *motivo*, which may be translated *strain* or *subject of the air*, and which they conceive to be inconsistent with the brevity and desultory sense of those ejaculations which are the effect of a high degree of agitation. Air they think even inadmissible in those passages, in which, though the emotions be not various, yet the sentences are broken and incoherent. To give an instance: the following speech, though terror be uniformly expressed

by the whole of it, seems not at all a subject fit to be comprehended under or expressed by one regular strain:—

"Bring me unto my trial when you will—
Died he not in his bed?—Where should he die?
Oh! torture me no more—I will confess.
Alive again!—then show me where he is;
I'll give a thousand pounds to look on him.
He hath no eyes;—the dust hath blinded them:—
Comb down his hair;—look! look! it stands upright,
Like lime twigs set to catch my winged soul!
Give me some drink," &c. SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY VI.

On such passages, however, the composer bestows his strongest light. It is here that he shows the effect of modulation, in order to characterise the transitions from one emotion to another, and that he employs the "accompaniments to produce such sounds as serve to awaken in the audience sensations and emotions similar to those which are supposed to agitate the speaker." Here again another fine distinction is made by the Italians, between the descriptive and the pathetic powers of music. The last are proper to the voice, the former to the orchestra alone. Thus the symphonies which accompany this kind of recitative, besides the general analogy they must have to the immediate sentiments, and even to the character of the speaker, are often particularly descriptive of the place in which he is, or of some other concomitant circumstance which may serve to heighten the effect of the speech itself. Suppose, for example, the scene to be a prison; the symphonies, whilst they accord with the general tenor of the words, will paint, if I may be allowed the expression, the horrors of the dungeon itself. Again, suppose the scene be moonlight, and the general tone of the passion plaintive; the sweetness, the serenity, and even the solitude, nay, the silence of the scene, would make part of the ideas suggested by the symphonies. In this kind of recitative the singer is, in a more especial manner, left to the dictates of his own feelings and judgments with respect to the measure; he must not indeed reverse the natural prosody of the language, by making short what would be long, or *vice versa*; but he may not only proportionally lengthen the duration of each syllable, but he may give to particular syllables what length he pleases, and precipitate considerably the pronunciation of others, just as he thinks the expression requires.

Our author next proceeds to the classification of the different kinds of *air* marked by the Italians, and which he is inclined to consider rather as technical in their eyes than as philosophical, although founded on distinctions of the various affections of the mind. After a few observations on the use of the *symphony* in preparing the audience by the enunciation of the subject or *motivo*, to listen with more intelligence and more interest to the song, and after pointing out the beautiful and striking effect which may be produced by the omission of it, where any sudden or violent gust of passion is to be expressed, he gives the following account of the divisions of the *air*:—

"*Aria Cantabile*, by pre-eminence so called, as if it alone were song, and indeed it is the only kind of song which gives the singer an opportunity of displaying at once, and in the highest degree, all his powers, of whatever description they be. The proper objects for this *air* are sentiments of tenderness. Though this be an expression which always tends to sadness, yet the sadness is of that pleasing kind which the mind loves to indulge. Hence it arises that the *aria cantabile*, whilst it is susceptible of great pathos, admits, without prejudice to the expression, of being highly ornamented, for this plain reason—that though the sentiments it expresses are affecting, they are at the same time such as the mind dwells on with pleasure; and it is like-

wise for this reason, that the subject of the *cantabile* must never border on deep distress, nor approach to violent agitation, both of which are evidently inconsistent with ornament. The motion of this *air*, though not so solemn as that which belongs to still graver subjects, is very slow, and its constituent notes of consequence proportionally long; I say *constituent notes*, in order to distinguish those which the singer introduces as ornamental from those which constitute the melody itself. These last are in general very few, extremely simple in their march, and so arranged as to allow great latitude to the skill of the singer. The instrumental parts are, in this kind of song, restricted to almost nothing; for, though the accompaniment is of use to the singer, because it supports the voice, yet it ought to be kept so subordinate to the vocal parts, as never, during the song, to become the object of attention. In listening to an *air* of this description, though the mind is all awake to feeling, yet are the emotions it experiences of that gentle kind which unfit it neither for the contemplation of beauty nor the admiration of art; on the contrary, they serve to dispose it more effectually for both. Thus many of the noblest faculties of the mind are gratified at once; we judge, we feel, we admire, at the same instant of time."

"*Aria di portamento*, a denomination expressive of the carriage of the voice. This kind of *air* is chiefly composed of long notes, such as the singer can dwell on, and have thereby an opportunity of more effectually displaying the beauties and calling forth the powers of his voice; for the beauty of sound itself, and of voice in particular, as being the finest of all sounds, is held by the Italians to be one of the chief sources of the pleasure we derive from music. The subjects proper for this *air* are sentiments of dignity, but calm and undisturbed by passion. The subject of the *aria di portamento* is of a nature too serious and important to admit of that degree of ornament which is essential to the *cantabile*. To illustrate the specific difference of these two classes, I might say, that were Venus to sing, her mode of song would be the *cantabile*; the *portamento* would be that of the queen of gods and men."

"*Aria di mezzo carattere* is a species of *air*, which, though expressive neither of the dignity of this last, nor of the pathos of the former, is, however, serious and pleasing. There may be an almost infinite variety of sentiments, very pretty and very interesting, which are not, nevertheless, of sufficient importance to be made the subject either of the *cantabile* or the *portamento*: the *aria di mezzo carattere* comprehends all such. From the great variety which this *air*, of consequence, embraces, as well as from the less emphatic nature of the sentiments to which it belongs, its general expression is not so determined as that of the former classes; yet, with respect to each individual *air*, the expression is far from being vague or dubious; and though some greater latitude be here granted to the fancy of the composer, nothing is given to his caprice, the sense itself of the words clearly ascertaining, in point both of degree and quality, the expression. The degree ought to be in exact proportion to the placidity or warmth of the sentiment, and its peculiar cast ought to be regulated by the nature of that passion to which the sentiment is allied, for sentiments are but gentler degrees of passion. Thus this class of *airs*, whilst it retains its own particular character, may by turns have some affinity with almost all the other classes; but, whilst its latitude is great in respect of variety, its limitations, with regard to degree, are obvious; it may be soothing, but not sad; it may be pleasing, but not elevated; it may be lively, but not gay. The motion

of this air is by the Italians termed *andante*, which is the exact medium of musical time between its extremes of slow and quick."

"As the vocal part is never supposed here to be so beautiful and interesting as in the higher classes, the orchestra, though it ought never to cover the voice, is not, however, kept in subordination to it; it is not only allowed to play louder, but may be more frequently introduced by itself, and may on the whole contribute more to the general effect of the air. This kind of song is admirably well calculated to give repose and relief to the mind from the great degree of attention and (with respect to myself, at least, I might say) agitation excited by the higher and more pathetic parts of the piece. They possess the true character which belongs to the subordinate parts of a beautiful whole, as affording a repose, not the effect of a total want of interest, but of an interest which they call forth of a different and more placid kind, which the mind can attend to with more ease, and can enjoy without being exhausted."

"*Aria parlante*—speaking air, is that which, from the nature of its subject, admits neither of long notes in the composition, nor of many ornaments in the execution. The rapidity of the motion of this air is proportioned to the violence of the passion which is expressed by it. This species of air goes sometimes by the name of *aria di nota e parola*, and likewise of *aria agitata*; but these are rather subdivisions of the species, and relate to the different degrees of violence of the passion expressed. It may be said to take up expression just where the *aria di mezzo carattere* leaves it. Some airs of this last class, of the liveliest cast, may approach indeed so near to some of the *parlante* of the agitated kind, that it might perhaps be difficult to say to which class they belonged; but, as soon as the expression begins to be in any degree impetuous, the distinction is evident; as the degree of passion to be expressed increases, the air assumes the name of *aria agitata*, *aria di strepito*, *aria infuriata*. Expressions of fear, of joy, of grief, of rage, when at all impetuous, to their highest and most frantic degrees, are all comprehended under the various subdivisions of the class. Their rhythm has its peculiar province, the effect of this kind of airs depending, perhaps, chiefly on its powers. The instrumental parts are here likewise of great efficacy, particularly in the expression of the more violent passions, giving, by the additions of a great body of sound, and by the distinctness and rapidity of their execution, a force and energy to the whole, which could never be the effect of the voice alone, however flexible, however powerful. Rousseau, somewhere in his works, makes a very ingenious observation, the truth of which the Italian composers seem evidently to have felt, that as violent passion has a tendency to choke the voice, so, in the expression of it by musical sounds, a *roulade*, which is a regular succession of notes up or down, or both, rapidly pronounced on one vowel, has often a more powerful effect than distinct articulation: such passages are sometimes introduced into airs of this kind."

"*Aria di bravura*—*Aria d'agilita*, is that which is composed chiefly, indeed, too often, merely to indulge the singer in the display of certain powers in the execution, particularly extraordinary agility or compass of voice. Though this kind of air may be sometimes introduced with some effect, and without any great violation of propriety; yet, in general, the means are here confounded with the end. Dexterity (if I may be allowed the expression) and artifice, instead of serving as the instruments, being made the object of the work. Such are the airs which with us

we so frequently observe sung to ears erect and gaping mouths, whilst the heart, in honest apathy, is carrying on its mere animal functions; and of this kind, indeed, are all the attempts in the different arts to substitute what is difficult or novel for what is beautiful and natural. Where there has ever been a genuine taste for any of the arts, this aptness to admire what is new and difficult is one of the first symptoms of the decline of that taste."

Thus it is, that this very elegant and judicious critic has arranged the several species of composition which we find in an opera. He concludes his work, however, by the addition of a kind which he says he ventures to call airs of imitation, by which he modestly indicates, that he considers the other distinctions to belong to the Italians, but that this is his own. Nothing, however, can be more just. He quotes the air of "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir," in *Acis and Galatea*, as the example. To produce this description, he images the resemblance and analogies which a pregnant fancy suggests, between the powers of music and the appearances of nature; in the example, he says, "there is no comparison made; the imitative part is only suggested by the sense, and the composer has taken the hint in adapting the music to it, and has, indeed, done it with the utmost propriety, as well as ingenuity. It is plain, in this air, that if the imitation of any thing is to be at all attempted, it must be that of the warbling choir: and it is as plain, that the passionate expression of the speaker has not even the most distant relation to the singing of birds; to have set the voice a singing, in imitation of the birds, or whilst the voice sang the passionate part, to have made the birds sing either in unison or in direct harmony with the voice, would have been each equally absurd. It would seem, indeed, at first sight, almost impossible to reconcile two things so different; yet this great genius, by confining each part to its proper province, has so artfully managed the composition, that, whilst the vocal most feelingly speaks the passion, a little flageolet from the orchestra carries on throughout, the delightful warbling of the choir; and though perfectly different in sound, melody, and rhythm, from the notes sung by the voice, instead of distracting the attention from it or of confounding the expression, it serves to add new beauty and grace to the effect; just as we may conceive a naked figure so veiled with some light and transparent vestment floating to the wind, as at once completely to reveal the figure, and by its undulating folds add new charms to the motion and the form."

[From "A Word or Two on the Flute."—By W. N. JAMES.]

ON THE CAPABILITIES OF THE GERMAN FLUTE.

I AM not one of those who think that the whole characteristic of the flute is confined to an *adagio* or *andante* movement. On the contrary, I believe that many of its principal beauties consist, and can only be appreciated and developed, in those rapid executive passages, which the instrument is abundantly capable of expressing with effect. I do not mean, however, to convey to the reader, that a fine *adagio* is not well suited to its character. In the hands of a fine performer, it is unquestionably the most effective: but those who know the instrument will, I think, agree with me in saying, that if the various modulations of which it is capable were to be prohibited, it would be considered as a loss little short of total extinction.

Let me dwell a little longer on this idea; for it is a charge so frequently brought by critics against the performers

on this instrument, that the matter ought to be properly explained and investigated.

There is little doubt that the foundation of this charge originated at a time when the flute was most imperfectly manufactured. Indeed, it is not a very long time since no instrument of the kind was made but with one key, and, consequently, at best, was capable of being played only in two modes, namely, one and two sharps. Now, even in these two modes, with an instrument of this description, the master could not perform every note strictly in tune; for the *C* sharp seventh must always have been too flat, and the *F* in *alt* must have been rather too sharp. If, then, the charge were to be confined to an instrument of this description, I would certainly join most cordially in the verdict; for here execution, and, above all, modulation, would be execrable to the most common ear,—not to speak of one, where the slightest deviation from strict unison would be grating and offensive.

But this is not all. The music for the *German* flute, till within these few years, was not at all calculated for the display of the instrument, imperfect as it was. Indeed, as we have seen from the foregoing history, about the beginning of the last century, music for the *flute abec*, or English flute, was common enough, and concertos were frequently performed on it. But the reader will distinctly understand me to mean the *German* and not the English flute.

The compositions for the instrument now in use amongst us, long after this period, and till within a very few years, were very contemptible. The utmost extent that even a professor dared to venture, was a Scotch or Irish air, with a petty variation or two. With such music, and with such instruments, therefore, it is not at all wonderful that those who attempted execution on it, or any thing beyond a slow air or brisk hornpipe, should have produced a dislike or disgust on the part of the hearers. Nor is it likely, on the other hand, that professors of the flute were content to remain pleased with themselves, in playing nothing but simple airs and dances, and scarcely a whit superior to the amateurs of the day. They naturally wished for something beyond this; and began to attempt a flourish of notes, and to add a few variations to their airs; and, perhaps, were solicitous to give a little modulation to the flat keys, as being altogether beyond the range of an amateur.

These innovations must have tended greatly to depreciate the flute, as an instrument calculated for the display of rapid passages; and hence the opinion which has been handed down to us, and is still attempted to be upheld by many, of the incapacity of our present instruments to effect that which these always failed in. But there can be nothing more unjust or unfair than this view of the question; for the flutes of the present day are so differently constructed from those made fifty years ago, that it at once presents to the mind the immense progress that has taken place since that period. The perfect mechanism of our present flutes could not even have been contemplated at that time,—and the admirable compositions which we now invariably meet with, however easy to the experienced amateur of the present day, would, fifty years ago, have bewildered a first-rate master.

Who, that has ever heard Monsieur Drouët on this instrument,—his inimitable articulation, equality of tone, rapid transitions, and beautiful chromatic passages,—will regret for a moment that he does not constantly perform some plaintive air or *largetto* movement? And yet he performs these with the most bewitching sweetness and expression. It is, I am free to confess, only one in a mil-

lion who can reach such real perfection as this gentleman: yet it is a specimen of what *can* be effected, and how desirable it would be to obtain a style any way approaching to it.

I have the greatest respect for those of my friends who differ with me upon this subject, and who think that a flute ought never to approach a difficult concerto. But I will appeal to those who are best acquainted with the instrument,—those who have studied it, and know it in all its points and ramifications,—whether they have not felt the greatest delight in giving effect to the most difficult compositions. This is the true test; for if the execution be not fitted for the instrument, it can yield him no pleasure in the study.

I wish to be perfectly understood. I speak of execution only as an auxiliary to the general effect; and contend that, with ease to the performer, the flute can be managed to produce it as well as any other instrument. It is well known that the equality of tone, and the perfection of playing in tune, depend entirely upon the skill of the performer; and that, without much practice, it cannot be acquired. Some notes will be too sharp—others too flat: there will be breaks and inequalities, which will be harsh and discordant to the ear. But does not the same case apply to every other instrument where the tone is to be produced? Take the violin, for instance, an instrument that is quite perfect. Let a tolerable performer play a concerto on it, and the same faults will be discovered as those which I have pointed out in the flute. Any thing like perfection cannot be acquired on either instrument but in the hands of a first-rate master. Why then, let me ask, this eternal accusation against the flute? It is much to be wished that people of this opinion knew of the splendid compositions of Gabrielsky, Berbiguer, and other great masters, whose works show that they were perfectly well aware of what the instrument was capable.

Of these eminent composers, I shall speak more fully in another place. My object, at present, is to establish the proposition, that the flute is capable of every variety of expression and execution within the three octaves to which it is limited. Let me single out for our examination, (as it is a piece well known to every amateur,) Drouët's celebrated variations to "God save the King." Here we have an abundance of difficulty in each variation. The first is made of running passages, and requires every note to be distinctly articulated; and it is, perhaps, the most arduous of the whole five, for no performance short of perfection can make it effective. The air is preserved most admirably throughout, and yet there is nothing far-fetched, or that baffles the instrument to accomplish. The third variation is one of quite a different character. It is composed of octaves, and abounds with chromatic passages. The flute executes the one with the greater precision, and there is no instrument in use amongst us which can accomplish the other with finer effect. The last variation of this distinguished piece is admirably calculated for the display of the instrument. It might be called a *solfeggio* passage; for the upper notes give distinctly the air, while an accompaniment is going on in the under ones. No instrument can give this description of execution with the like remarkable accuracy, or blend the air and accompaniments with such nice distinctions and perfection. Will it, then, be doubted, that the flute is an instrument which cannot accomplish these passages? And yet, in this piece, we have almost every difficulty in three octaves, which music is capable of comprehending. It is time, therefore, that these sceptics should forget their old prejudices, and be

made perfectly to understand that the charge brought, fifty years ago, against the flute, is wholly inapplicable to the instruments which are now in use amongst us.

If I might be allowed to speak at all of the ingenuity displayed by our countrymen in the manufacture of this instrument, I would mention the amazing improvements which Messrs. Rudall and Rose, of London, have effected. They have now brought the flute to such a degree of perfection as could scarcely be contemplated so short a time as thirty years ago. Mr. Rudall is himself an exquisite player on the instrument; and his ideas regarding the mechanism of it are truly philosophical. The execution of the mechanical part of these flutes is quite perfect; and the correct intonation of almost every note is a beauty which will recommend them to the notice of every amateur of science and taste. I frequently met with flutes, by these makers, on the Continent; and every master of the instrument, with whom I had a conversation upon the subject, pronounced them to be unrivalled, with regard to the quality of their tone, and correctness of intonation.

[To be continued.]

FOREIGN MUSICAL REPORT.

VIENNA.

AFTER the principal theatres of Germany had produced Boieldieu's last opera *Die Beiden Nöcht* (Les Deux Nuits,) it was somewhat late in the day brought before a Vienna audience. Without dwelling on the plot, which is sufficiently known, we will only observe that the composition is spirited, pleasing, and melodious; the instrumentation is tasteful, and often striking in point of harmony, as might be expected from the experienced author of the *Dame Blanche*; but their common origin was sufficiently evident, and the composer's greatest friends could not acquit him of frequent and palpable reminiscences: hence the impression, though favorable upon the whole, was not lasting, and the existence of the work in the repertoire but transient. A new operetta, *Der Herzog von Gestern*, (The Duke of Yesterday,) is, as usual, played to empty benches. Campilli's fairy ballet *Leibe Stärker als Zaubermacht*, (Love stronger than Magic,) the music by Romani and Count Gallenberg, was brought out at a considerable expense; the scenery and costumes were splendid, most tasteful, and of surprising beauty; these efforts were rewarded with decisive success.

BERLIN.

Madame Schroeder Devrient has concluded her engagement, after selecting for her benefit Bellini's *Capuleti e Montecchi*, in order to appear in what is considered one of her first characters, Romeo, although this part is likewise executed by Mdle. Hänel on the *Königsstädter theater* with great effect and success. The friends of Madame Devrient were disappointed in not seeing her in any of Gluck's operas, several of which are particularly suited to her unrivalled dramatic genius. As to the *Capuleti*, the two first acts, owing probably to the mediocrity of the music, did not create great sensation, but in the third act this representative of the Tragic Muse excited the most intense interest and admiration. Madame S. Devrient seemed to be inspired by a superior power; the scene at the sarcophagus of Juliet was the highest triumph of dramatic art. After a long repose, Weber's *Euryanthe* was reproduced; the beautiful music, and Madame S. Devrient's unrivalled performance, rendered this representation a high

treat to the public; we could willingly indulge in a long catalogue of beauties, to which her acting imparted the effect of enchantment, did our space permit such detail: her departure for Dresden is sensibly felt by the treasury of the theatre, which has since had recourse to comedies of Angely and old operettas, performed to almost empty houses.

The *Königsstädter theater*, with the assistance of Madame de Méric, has produced Bellini's *Montecchi* in the Italian language; she gained much applause in the character of Gioletta, and, after completing the twelve representations for which she had been engaged, set out for Milan. Auber's *Leibstrank* (Le Philtre) was the only musical novelty on this stage: it met with little encouragement, the plot being insipid, the music common-place, and too palpable an imitation of Rossini. The public were much more delighted with the universally popular farce, *Lumpacivagabundus*; the comicalities of the jovial triumvirate were depicted to the life by MM. Schmelka, Beckmann, and Plock.

Kappellmeister Reissiger, from Dresden, has paid us a short visit during his vacation, and produced in private circles a superb trio for the pianoforte, and a quintet for two violins, tenor and two violoncellos, both of his own composition: the latter distinguishes itself by its beautiful melodic fluency and skilful elaboration. We are in daily expectation of the production of his recent opera, *Die Felzenmühle*, (The Mill of the Rocks,) but the heat of the season, and the departure of a numerous portion of the theatrical public to the country, seem to paralyze all dramatic performances.

STUTTGART.

The only new representation of the season was *Robert der Teufel*, (Robert le Diable,) the performance of which, having long been announced, was expected with the most intense curiosity. The first few performances attracted immense crowds of professors, amateurs, and play-goers in general, of every sex and age, from Stuttgart, as well as from all the surrounding country. The opera was executed by our best singers, and by our numerous choral establishment, who had studied the music with the greatest care under the instruction of our meritorious music director, Molique. Scenery, dresses and machinery were splendid; and yet, in spite of these favorable circumstances, the opera did not meet with the rapturous reception which had been anticipated. The applause seemed to diminish at every representation, at the last of which, the sixth, the house was but moderately attended. *Moses in Egypt*, by Rossini, and Lindpaintner's *Vampyr*, have been reproduced with a new cast of characters, the latter under the direction of the author himself, after his recovery from a long illness, on which occasion he received the most affecting tokens of the participation of his friends and the public. Without dwelling on the catalogue of numerous well-known operas which were produced, we have to mention two or three new ballets, viz. the *Insulaner*, (Islanders,) the *Bloede Ritter*, (Bashful Knight,) and the *Graue Männchen*, (Grey little Man.)

As visitors we heard M. Oberhoffer, of the Imperial Theatre of Vienna, in the parts of the Vampyr, in *Zampa*, and in Kaspar in the *Freischütz*. Mr. O. possesses a pleasing sonorous voice, appears to be a solid musician, treads the stage nobly and with freedom, and received well-earned applause. Mdle. von Fassman appeared twice, namely as Camilla in *Zampa*, and as Donna Anna in *Don Juan*. This lady also is endowed with a power-

ful, youthful, fresh voice; her exterior is pleasing, and, for a beginner, her acting very meritorious: the latter character was, however, rather above her present powers.

The grand Musical Festival, which it was intended should take place in our Cathedral, for the performance of an Oratorio of Handel, or some other classic sacred composition, was unfortunately postponed. With respect to sacred music in general, the catalogue of recent performances is but insignificant: in the Catholic Church, however, we had a Mass by Buhler, which presented several good and successful pieces; and in the Royal Chapel, we had, among other choral pieces, the 'Lord's Prayer,' composed by the Court musician, Abenheim. The Society of Instrumental Music gave a Concert in the Saloon of the Museum, for the benefit of the young composer, Louis Hetch, now residing in Vienna, in token of their gratitude for the services rendered by him while Director of this Institution.

STRASBURG.

M. Hyacinth Brice undertook the direction of the French Theatre, for the first time without pecuniary assistance from the city funds, for the season from 1833 to 1834; but his company could only be gradually and with difficulty rendered complete, as the public had rejected the second tenor, Adolphe Bernaux, and the baritone, Welch, whose place could only be supplied after some lapse of time. These impediments and the mediocrity of some of the singers rendered our French Opera but little interesting; *Le Serment* and *Robert le Diable* were the only new representations upon which a considerable degree of care was bestowed, but the older operas were brought out with unexampled negligence and imperfections, the numerous instances of which it is unnecessary to record. After the close of the French performances, the German company, under the direction of M. Weinmüller, from Augsburg, began its representations, but here we also met with various disappointments: instead of M. Chelard, who was announced as leader, we were obliged to be contented with a young beginner, M. Kirchner, who often mistakes the *tempi*, and Demoiselles Podleski from the Mannheim stage, and Louisa Gned, of the Francfort Theatre, presented themselves at a late period of the season; the appearance of the latter, however, impressed the public with a sense of the great loss they had sustained by her long absence. Adorned with every charm of youth, her powerful organ has an admirable effect in our large theatre, and the public is in raptures whenever she presents herself on the stage. On the 12th June, Mozart's *Requiem* was performed in its complete state, with great solemnity, in our fine cathedral the Minster, in honor of Lafayette. Though in any other locality the number of performers might have been considerable, yet in this vast edifice the effect did not correspond with the means employed. It was only in the immediate vicinity of the orchestra, under the excellent direction of Mr. Kapellmeister Wackenthaler, that all the beauties of this masterpiece could be appreciated.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

M. Ferdinand Ries has been appointed Director of the Orchestra, and of the Singing Academy, with a salary of 1500 thalers, about 225*l*.

STOCKHOLM.

Among the newest dramatic pieces, none has caused so much interest and drawn so much applause as the opera *Ryno*, by the Court Marshal von Beskow. The composition of the music had been begun by the talented composer

Brendler, and after his premature death, was completed by the Crown Prince of Sweden.

POTSDAM.

The second grand festival of the Brandenburg Vocal Society took place on the 5th and 6th June, at Potsdam, under the management of M. Schärlich. This Society, which was founded only last year, is composed of thirty branch societies, established in various parts of the Electoral dominions, the members being professed church singers, schoolmasters, organists, &c. These branch societies have their regular individual meetings, and assemble once a year, in a mass, to celebrate their grand festival. On this occasion the first day was devoted to the sacred festival, in the court and garrison church. The performance began with a portion of the Liturgy, by the chorus; then followed a fugue on the organ, played by M. Hönnicke; after which was sung a very effective but simple motet of Bernhard Klein, the first part of which was a *capella*, the other accompanied by the organ and wind instruments; the effect produced by this composition was very grand. To this succeeded a motet, by Professor Dr. Marx, for six voices, without accompaniment, which, as regards modulation and interlacement of the parts, appeared to be in imitation of the ancient style of Christian church music; this motet, though very difficult, was most admirably sung. M. F. Belcke then played a fantasia on the trombone with organ accompaniment, in a finished manner; and, after another grand motet by Bernhard Klein, the first part of the day's festival closed with a hymn for double chorus and solos, with instrumental accompaniment,—a happy effort of the genius of Dr. Friedrich Schneider, who composed it for the occasion, and conducted its performance. The second part commenced with the 'Holy,' from the Liturgy; then M. Köhler, from Breslau, played a fantasia upon the organ, on the subject of the Hallelujah in Handel's *Messiah*. A very fine melodic hymn by Schärlich followed, being sung with great expression. M. C. G. Belcke, from Altenburg, then executed with much feeling an adagio for the flute, with organ accompaniment; after which, another motet of Bernhard Klein was given; and the performance closed with a hymn, by A. Neidhart, with accompaniment of wind instruments, of a character rather light and pleasing than sacred, which produced an admirable effect, the solos being delightfully sung by MM. Mantius, Stämer, Hammermeister, and Zschiesche. After the festival, which terminated at two o'clock, a dinner was spread for 450 persons, in the garden of the Teutonia Lodge, under a tent adorned with the Prussian arms. Among the invited guests were the Chevalier Spontini, Kapellmeister Fr. Schneider, Music Director Rungenhagen, Kapellmeister Reissiger, M. Didike from Dessau, Professor Dr. Marx, M. Köhler, principal organist in Breslau, M. D. Neiderhart, M. Girschner, and several amateurs of Berlin, Potsdam, &c. Mirth, cheerful conversation, and good singing, contributed to enliven the scene.

The festival of the second day began at five o'clock in the afternoon, at the Tornow, on the Havel, a place of entertainment not far from Potsdam, whither upwards of 3000 individuals repaired by land or water to witness it. The pieces of music performed were Spontini's animated Festival March, for military instruments; *Königslied*, (King's Song,) for two choruses, by M. Schärlich, without accompaniment; a Sacred Song, set to music by I. P. Schmidt, and particularly adapted for male voices, with wind instrument accompaniment; in this the choruses sang

purely, correctly, and with expression, and the accompaniment told well; the voices, however, in the solo parts, were but faintly heard in the open air;—instrumental solo Cavatina, from *Der Freischütz*, by M. F. Belcke, on the trombone, with wind instrument accompaniments; Hunting Chorus, by Girschner, lively and popular; Battle Song, by Girschner; Torch Dance, for wind instruments; Hunting Song, by Scharlich, light, natural, and pleasing; a song, by Fr. Schneider; and the festival concluded with Spontini's National Song, 'Borussia.'

ZEITZ.

A vocal festival was celebrated here on the 21st May, in the church, which, though rather small, is well adapted for such a purpose; the performance took place under the direction of M. Rector Bräutigam, from Lucca, in Altenburg. After a short introduction on the organ, a choral composition of M. Sachse, of Altenburg, was given, and this was followed by a psalm, by Bernhard Klein, which, notwithstanding its exceeding difficulties, was admirably given. After this was executed a motet, by a young composer from Altenburg, M. Hössler, a very promising production; and the first part concluded with a motet, with double chorus, by Schicht.

The pieces constituting the second part were a hymn, by M. Feller, organist in Eisenburg; *Sanctus* and *Hosanna in Excelsis*, by Hasslinger; a choral composition, with variations for the organ and bassoon, by Music Director W. Bach, of Berlin; and a *Te Deum*, by Knecht, for two male choruses. The singers, 367 in number, consisting of pastors, schoolmasters, and a few dilettanti, were the members of twelve different vocal societies assembled for this occasion.

The **MAGDEBURG** Festival, announced in our last number as fixed for the 28th, 29th, and 30th May, was, in consequence of unforeseen occurrences, postponed till the 2d and 3d July.

The **HEIDELBERG** Festival took place as announced; Haydn's *Creation* was very ably performed, and the audience, consisting of 2500 persons, were highly gratified.

LONDON.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—At length this interesting theatre has started up out of the ruins which the public has so long deplored. The difficulties of many kinds thrown in the way of its re-erection made us begin to fear that it had fallen never more to rise, and that the *Paul Pry* order of writers would lose the glorious opportunity of displaying their eloquence by comparing it to a phoenix. However, thanks to the determined perseverance of Mr. Arnold, and the skill of Mr. Beazly, it has not only appeared once again, but in a much more beautiful and perfect form than it ever before assumed, and with a prospect of not only fully indemnifying all who have embarked capital in it, but of amply rewarding the manager for his active and enterprising spirit, and, what is of more importance than all the rest, of bringing into the field composers who may rescue English opera from the degraded state into which for years past it has fallen.

The new theatre was opened on Monday, July 14th. On entering it we were immediately struck by its beauty, with reference both to form and decorations. Everywhere is convenience combined with elegance. The audience part of the house is in the horse-shoe form. There are two full tiers of boxes, and at each side of the gallery are what may be termed box-slips. There is only one gallery, but this is capacious and com-

fortable: no part of the house is better contrived for seeing and hearing. The front of the first circle of boxes is ornamented with a series of classical subjects, pencilled on a light ground. The second circle is decorated with imitations of shawl drapery, which are rather too warm, as well as somewhat heavy, but these are immediately to be altered, and the deep crimson to be changed to a fawn color. The boxes of the first circle, in the centre of the house, which are all separately enclosed, are thrown back, and before them a balcony is formed, two seats deep, fitted up with stalls, and having an open gilt balustrade in front. An additional shilling is put on these seats, which certainly are exceedingly convenient in all respects, though, we fear, they will prevent the boxes behind from letting, except on very particular occasions. Imitative balustrades, of a pale rose hue, relieved with gold, extend round the box-slips and gallery, giving a very delicate finish to the whole. Six slender fluted Corinthian columns, in white and gold, support the boxes and gallery, adding as much to the beauty as to the security of the house. The ceiling is handsome; it is concave, and divided into compartments, ornamented with musical symbols, and rendered more interesting by the introduction of medallions of several eminent composers. From the centre of this hangs a splendid lustre, lighted by gas. The proscenium is light, and tastefully ornamented in the Italian style. In the centre of this the king's arms are placed, on the right and left of which chains of flowers are introduced, and from these, medallions of Mozart and Weber are suspended.

The principal entrance to the boxes is extremely handsome. From a grand portico of the Corinthian order is an entrance to a small, but well-proportioned hall, where the broad flight of steps on the right and left have a bold effect. Ascending these, the visiter finds himself beneath Roman arches, ornamented with roses in compartments. Under these arches is the corridor, connected on one side with the dress circle, on the other with the saloon—a small, but pretty room, far removed from the audience. The pit is large, and part of it extends under the balcony. The house, when filled, will hold three hundred and sixty pounds.

THE NEW OPERA—NOURJAHAD.—We are enabled to give a more detailed account of this opera than our limits permitted in our first number. It has been very popular, the past season, in London.

During the first week, some old pieces were performed; but on the 21st of July a new opera, written by Mr. Arnold, and composed by Mr. E. Loder—being the first essay of the latter—was produced, under the title of *Nourjahad*, which is thus cast:—

SCHMEZEDDIN, Sultan of Persia,	- -	MR. WILSON.
NOURJAHAD, his friend,	- -	MR. H. PHILLIPS.
HASEM, attendant on Nourjahad,	- -	MR. KELEY.
ASSAN, a Slave Merchant,	- -	MR. J. BLAND.
BARHADDAN, personating a Genius,	- -	MISS NOVELLO.
MANDANE, Wife of Nourjahad,	- -	MISS FANNY HEALY.
ZULIMA,	- -	MISS E. ROMER.
FATIMA,	- -	MISS HUNT.

Under the title of *Illusion, or the Trances of Nourjahad*, this drama was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, in 1813; the music by Kelly. It was attributed to Lord Byron, who having denied it, Mr. Arnold was discovered to be the author. The story is that of Mrs. Sheridan's beautiful novel, and may be thus told:—*Nourjahad* is under the influence of a burning desire for inexhaustible wealth and immortality. His friend, the Sultan, in order to bring

him to reason, causes *Barhaddan* to appear to him as a powerful Genius, who presents him with the key to a cave of boundless treasure, and with a liquor, the smell of which confers immortality: accompanied, however, with the condition, that should he violate the laws of the Prophet, he will be subject to trances. His first crime, intoxication, is soon committed. Awaking, at the commencement of the second act, he is told that he has been in a trance during four years, and that his *Mandane* is no more, having died in giving birth to a son. He consoles himself with his favorite slave, *Zulima*. His second offence is cruelty, in refusing to allow *Zulima* to return to her anxious and entreating father. Again he goes to sleep. When he once more awakes, all seems changed: he is made to believe that he has been forty years entranced—that the Sultan and all his friends are dead—and that his son lives to execrate his memory. A scene now ensues of considerable interest: *Schemzeddin* personates the son of *Nourjahad*, and *Mandane* is presented to him as his grand-daughter. His suffering is great, his repentance sincere, and he is sufficiently punished. The truth, therefore, is revealed to him; he obtains the forgiveness of every one; and all ends in the usual manner of operas.

In an Eastern tale, probability, of course, has no share; but, allowing for this, the story is well dramatised, the language is good; and though the *dénouement* is from the very beginning anticipated, yet some degree of interest is kept up to the end.

The music highly gratified, and not a little surprised us; except the overture, which we pass over without further notice. Every piece in the opera is calculated to please both those who are and those who are not qualified to judge it critically. Originality is, undoubtedly, not the chief characteristic of many of the composer's designs; but after the imitations, the plagiarisms, that we have been accustomed to hear on the English stage, the reminiscences met with in *Nourjahad* should be treated with lenity. This much we may safely assert—that whatever Mr. Loder is indebted for, intentionally or not, to certain popular composers, has been greatly ameliorated in passing through his hands; for even when the subject does betray some resemblances, Mr. Loder has treated it in so original, so elegant, and so masterly a manner, that every possible allowance should be made for what perhaps has been rather the result of haste than of a wilful determination to appropriate to himself that which of right belongs to others. Indeed, the imitations or likenesses that we trace are more general than particular—more in the style than in the notes; though it cannot be denied, that in two or three instances, the composer has used *motivi* which, on deliberately rehearsing, he might easily have discovered to be, strictly speaking, not altogether his own.

As a whole, the opera was exceedingly well performed. Mr. H. Phillips was, as he always is, excellent; Miss Healy and Miss Romer both sing in tune and in time, have nothing at all vulgar in their manner, and their voices are agreeable: these are qualities for which, when the music is good, we would gladly compound. Mr. Wilson acted his part well; better than he sung it. His voice is much in his favor; but his style wants refinement. The orchestra did its duty in a most perfect manner; and every praise is due to the choral department. The piece is got up with a liberality which, we well know, tells in the end, but must have brought serious demands on the funds of a young treasury. Its success has been of the most decided kind; and it is our belief that *Nourjahad* will not be known to only the present generation.

VOL. I.

21

HEREFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

The one hundred and eleventh meeting of the neighboring choirs of Worcester, Gloucester, and Hereford, was held in the latter city in the second week of September, for which preparations had been made on a wider scale than hitherto, and the success, at least in a pecuniary point of view, was greater than has been known for many years. But the manager, or managers, betrayed a little want of experience in such matters, particularly in allowing a dissension between the two *prime donne* to be productive of considerable derangement in the various programs, and the source of much disappointment to the company. If the committee of managers, or conductor, or whoever may be the ruling party, is not exceedingly absolute on such occasions, especially when foreign ladies are concerned, the chances are that infinite mischief will ensue. The plan of operation should be, from the very first, laid down; the singers ought to be engaged with an understanding that they are to be governed by such plan; and if from false notions of their own dignity, or from caprice, they refuse to perform the duties assigned to them, an action for damages would not only lie, but ought to be brought, for any injury sustained in consequence of their conduct.

Among the vocal performers were Mesdames Stockhausen, Caradori Allan, and Knyvett; Messrs. Braham, Sapio, Boissragon, and H. Phillips. Among the instrumentalists, Messrs. F. Cramer and Mori, leaders; Messrs. Loder, Lindley, Dragonetti, Williams, and Nicholson. The Orchestra altogether consisted of 120 performers, equally, therefore disproportionately, divided. Mr. S. S. Wesley, organist of the cathedral, was the conductor.

On the present occasion, and we believe for the first time, the morning performances were in the nave of the cathedral, instead, as formerly, in the choir. This arrangement, made by the Dean, was a vast improvement, giving more space for the company, and enabling the managers to fix different prices, so as to admit nearly all who really wished to enjoy the music. With this most laudable view, galleries were erected, and the nave as well as aisles were floored and supplied with benches. The tickets to the gallery were 12s. 6d; to the centre of the floor, 10s; and to the aisles, 3s.

The music selected for this Festival included the Dettingen *Te Deum*, and the *Jubilate*, by Handel; Spohr's Oratorio, *The Last Judgment*; Mozart's *Requiem*; selections from the *Creation*, and *Messiah*; and a great variety of pieces from other works.

The Festival lasted three days; the morning performances consisting of sacred music, and the evening, of Concerts, of various selections from operas, &c.

[We are again reluctantly compelled for want of room, to defer our account of the Birmingham Festival until a subsequent number.]

DOMESTIC MUSICAL REPORT.

WASHINGTON.

Mrs. Austin and Mr. Walton have performed in some favorite operas in this city, during a short engagement which terminated on the 24th January.

BALTIMORE.

The Halliday street Theatre opened on the 5th of January, with the play of the "Tempest," the parts of Ariel and Ferdinand being sustained by Mrs. Austin and Mr. Walton. A succession of musical pieces followed,

among which were the Beggar's Opera, the Duenna, Abon Hassan, Music and Prejudice, &c., the principal characters being sustained by these performers.

On the 19th of January the opera of Cinderella was produced for the benefit of Mrs. Austin, with the following cast of the principal characters.

Clorinda,	Mrs. Willis,
Thisbe,	Miss Verity,
Fairy Queen,	Mrs. Watts,
Cinderella,	Mrs. Austin,
Prince,	Mr. Walton,
Dandini,	Mr. Still,
The Baron,	Mr. De Camp.

A Grand Oratorio took place on Thursday the 15th January, the following being the programme:—

PART I.

Overture to Clemenza di Tito,	MOZART.
Solo. "Angels ever bright and fair,"	HANDEL.
Duet. "Graceful consort,"	HAYDN.
Solo and Chorus. "All Glory be to God on high,"	HAYDN.
Quartette, four male voices, "Incline thine ear, O Lord,"	GILLES.
Grand Chorus. "The Heavens declare,"	HAYDN.

PART II.

Grand Chorus. The Creed.	ANDRE.
Solo. "With verdure clad,"	HAYDN.
Benedictus—from the Requiem,	MOZART.
Soprano Solo. "O! Zion, O! Jerusalem,"	R. CARR.
Quartette, for four male voices, "The Chapel,"	KREUTZER.
Grand Chorus. "Father, to thy praise and glory."	MOZART.

The General Director of this performance was Mr. J. Nenninger, assisted by Messrs. Meinicke, Dielman, and Schmidt, and the most eminent instrumental performers in the city. The vocal department, male and female, was composed of the most prominent amateurs of the place. The assemblage of talent was unsurpassed by that of any previous occasion, the parts were admirably filled and well sustained, and the music was executed in a very finished manner. It is seldom that so rich a musical treat has been presented to the inhabitants of Baltimore. Another Oratorio is in contemplation, the proceeds of which are to be employed to give the first impulse to an **EDUCATION SOCIETY**, the design of which is to educate gratuitously *poor boys of all denominations of Christians*. So praiseworthy an object should be encouraged by every lover of music, and by every humane and benevolent person.

A Grand Concert was given on the 22d of January, in the Saloon of the Athenaeum, by Sig. Giovanni Fabj, first tenor of our last opera company. The principal performers were, Vocal—Signor Fabj; Instrumental—Piano, L. Major; Violin, B. Nenninger; and Guitar, V. Schmidt.

Mr. C. E. Horn gave a Concert on Thursday evening, the 29th of January; he was assisted by his son, Mr. C. Horn, and by Mrs. C. Horn. This lady possesses a beautiful voice, and by study and practice will attain a high rank amongst the female vocalists of the country. Mr. Horn, jr. is said to possess great knowledge of music, and a voice of an agreeable quality, which has been well cultivated. We understand they are soon expected at New York.

PHILADELPHIA.

A Concert was given by the Philharmonic Society, on Tuesday evening, December 30th, in the Musical Fund Hall. It was numerously attended, and afforded universal gratification. The selections were varied and excellent, and such as to reflect great credit on the members. We trust and expect that the efforts of the Society will be attended with the perfect success which they merit.

—*Nat. Gaz.*

Another Concert took place on Tuesday evening, the 27th January.

The Philadelphia Sacred Music Society announce a Concert for Thursday evening, the 29th January, at which the principal parts of Haydn's Oratorio of the Seasons was to be performed.

The Musical Fund Society announce a Concert, for Thursday, February 5th.

ALBANY.

Another Oratorio was given by that public spirited institution, the "Albany Sacred Music Fund Society," on Thursday evening, January 15th, for the benefit of the Orphan Asylum, and we are glad to see that it was not given in vain. The Treasurer of the Asylum acknowledges the receipt of \$301 25. The Conductor was Mr. I. P. Cole, and Organist, W. M. Pease. The music selected was in general of a sterling character, and the performances very creditable to the Society. We wish them every success in their career.

BOSTON.

At the Theatres there has been nothing of much interest during the past month.

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.—This Society performed the whole of the Messiah with the additional accompaniments of Mozart, on Sunday evening, December 28th, and again on Sunday evening, January 4th. Haydn's Creation was performed entire on Sunday evening, January 18th, and again on the 25th. As this Society has a powerful and well disciplined chorus, and at its performances is assisted by the full band of the Tremont Theatre, the lovers of the majesty and grandeur of Handel, and of the grace and brilliancy of Haydn, were both afforded the highest gratification by these performances.

NEW YORK.

ITALIAN OPERA.—The Italian Opera is again in operation in New York, and, we sincerely hope, in the full tide of successful experiment.

As we are almost without any national music of our own, we regard it as of the utmost importance to our future musical career, that we should derive our ideas of musical excellence from the purest sources, and that we should become familiar with the best models of musical composition. For these we must principally look to Italy and Germany, the two countries that have made the greatest advances and contributed the largest share towards carrying this art to its present high state of perfection.

We have before expressed our opinion that an operatic establishment in this city is highly desirable in the abstract, on account of the influence it will exert on the taste of the public by rendering them familiar with the best models of composition and performance. Nothing, in our opinion, so soon improves the taste and judgment of a people as that of hearing good music and good performers; every measure, therefore, that adds to the means of so doing, is to be regarded in a greater or less degree as conducive to the spread of musical knowledge and taste in the community, and in this point of view, we regard the opera as possessing the most beneficial influence.

The theatre is to the composer the source from whence he derives the largest portion of his profit and his fame, and accordingly we find that the major part of the works of the most celebrated composers have been written for the operatic boards. It is almost certain, that without an operatic establishment, many of the finest compositions the masters of music must continue unknown to us; and every lover of music who wishes to enjoy those

master pieces of genius is, for selfish considerations, if no higher motives should influence him, interested in nourishing this beautiful exotic, until it becomes firmly rooted in our soil.

A portion of our citizens have built one of the neatest theatres on this side the Atlantic, and have devoted it exclusively to the purpose of operatic representations; these, with others, have gone still further, and now, to insure its permanent continuance, have guaranteed the payment of all expenses incurred. Public spirit cannot be carried much further than this, and these gentlemen merit all praise for their liberal efforts in the cause of the opera. But, it cannot but be expected that the warmest zeal will cool when too great sacrifices are demanded, and therefore, the exertions of these gentlemen should be seconded by the zeal of every amateur, who wishes ultimately to see a permanent establishment for the performance of Italian opera in this country.

If the present company is not so good as is desirable, still they form the nucleus of a better, and should therefore be kept together. Arrangements have been made to procure from the Havana, Pedrotti, Montessor, Fornasari, Orlandi, and the Leader, Rapetti. These, added to those at present here, will constitute a very capital and powerful company; one indeed, that most of the cities of Europe might be proud of.

To give more variety to the performances, the managers are about organizing a corps de Ballet, under the direction of Mr. Bennet, late principal dancer at Covent Garden Theatre, London, who has been engaged as Ballet Master and First Dancer.

The only change in the vocal part of the company is the engagement of Signor Ravaglia as principal tenor, in place of Signor Fabj.

The orchestra is composed principally of the same performers as before, and now, with the Leader, consists of—

7 Violins,	2 Clarionets,
2 Violas,	1 Bassoon,
2 Violoncellos,	2 Horns,
2 Contra Bassos,	2 Trumpets,
2 Flutes,	3 Trombones,
1 do. for the Oboe,	Drums.

The House re-opened on Friday the 21st of January, with *L'Inganno Felice*, and the second act of *Eduardo e Cristina*, the parts being sustained by the same performers as in our last report, with the exception of the change of Signor Ravaglia in the place of Fabj. Fanti, who continues to be the chief attraction of the house, sang with her usual ability and spirit, and displayed much talent as an actress.

When Signor Ravaglia avoids his falsetto, he is a pleasing singer; his voice within its natural compass is of an agreeable quality, and is quite flexible, for he executes with smoothness and facility very rapid and difficult passages. His return to the boards is quite an accession to the strength of the present company. His Cavatina in *L'Inganno Felice*, with the Flute accompaniment by Mr. Taylor, was warmly applauded.

Miss Wheatley sang as well as usual, and received her share of approbation, as did also Messrs. Porto, Ferrero, &c.

These pieces were repeated on Monday the 26th, and on the 28th, *L'Inganno Felice*, and the second act of *La Straniera*, were performed. No performance took place on the 30th, the house being closed to give time for the preparations necessary to produce Rossini's opera *L'Assedio di Corinto*, an account of which we must reserve until our next number.

PARK THEATRE.—Since our last report, opera has been the principal attraction at this house. Miss Phillips, Miss Watson, Messrs. Jones, Latham and Richings, enabling the manager to present operas in a very effective manner.

On the 6th of January, Bishop's opera "Native Land" was revived, and performed for the first time in seven years. It was cast as follows:—

Aurelio di Montalto,	Mr. Jones,
Giuseppe,	Mr. Fisher,
Tancredi,	Mr. Richings,
Peregrino,	Mr. Latham,
Jacomo,	Mr. Hayden,
Clymante,	Miss S. Phillips,
Biondello,	Miss Watson,
Lavinia,	Mrs. Gurner,
Zanina,	Mrs. Chapman.

The music of this opera was selected, arranged, and partly composed by Bishop. It contains many fine pieces from the works of Rossini and others.

The characters were ably supported. Miss S. Phillips and Miss Watson sang in their best style, and were frequently encored. Mr. Jones appeared to the best possible advantage, and probably never more gratified his hearers. Mr. Latham sang with spirit and acted with spirit, and with Mrs. Chapman, contributed greatly to the life and humor of the piece; indeed, it was ably supported throughout, and gave great satisfaction.

Various other operas were given during the month, the principal of which were the Barber of Seville, with all the original music as arranged by Mr. Penson, and Cinderella. On Miss S. Phillips' performance in this opera, the following critique appears in the Courier and Enquirer, and as the opinions of the writer are, we think, just, we quote them.

"The opera of Cinderella was performed on Tuesday evening before one of the most satisfied audiences we have yet seen. Miss Phillips was in her finest voice, and gave the finale, *Non piu mesta*, with an effect quite electrical. Never, within the walls of the Park Theatre, have we heard warmer applause, or a more enthusiastic encore than it called forth; yet we do not consider Cinderella Miss Phillips' happiest effort. The exuberance of ornament in which she delights to indulge, is frequently out of character with the music, and destroys its effect. Thus her opening air, "Once a King," which is beautiful from the simplicity of its character, she utterly ruins by the roudades with which she overloads it. Mrs. Wood used to sing it without even a trill, and we all recollect the enchanting effect produced by the simple and touching melody of her voice. We know that the great fault of the Italian school of singing, is the excess to which embellishment is carried under the sanction of modern composers, and the approbation of fashion. Rossini himself was the first to encourage this style by the composition of his operas, which abound in passages requiring the utmost flexibility of voice, and a facility in executing divisions, formerly attempted only by females [instruments.] Miss P. has evidently acquired her style in this school, which, faulty as it is in the Italian, becomes doubly so in English operas. We had occasion, formerly, to apply similar remarks to the singing of Mrs. Wood, and to Bordogni. The former, we have vanity enough to think, attended to our suggestions; but the latter continued, to the last, her roudades and trills. It was her style, and nothing could induce her to alter it. Though we are ardent admirers of Miss Phillips' vocal talents, we are by no means insensible to her imperfections, the chief of which is that we have noticed above."

EUTERPEAN CONCERT.—The annual Concert and Ball of this Society took place on Thursday evening, the 29th January, at the City Hotel.

The following selection of music was given:—

Symphony in B flat, Orchestra,	HAYDN.
Song, "The Sea," Mr. Sheppard,	NEUKOMM.
Ballad, "Her heart is not there," Mrs. Franklin,	BAYLEY.
Pot Pourri, from Der Freyschutz, Clarinet, Mr. Schubert,	WEBER.
Glee, "Brigand Banks,"	CLARKE.
Solo, Violin, Mr. Schmidt.	
Cavatina, "Idol de ma vie," from Robert le Diable,	
Miss Watson,	MEYERBEER.
La Clemenza di Tito, Orchestra,	MOZART.
Cavatina, "Tell me, my heart," Mrs. Franklin,	BISHOP.
Variations, Violoncello, J. Lidel Herrmann,	MEIK.
Ballad, "The margin of fair Zurich's waters,"—(By particular desire,)—Miss Watson,	Swiss Melody.
Concerto, Pianoforte, Philipson,	
Alpine Air, "As wakes the Sun," Miss Watson,	WATSON.
Glee, "Mynheer Van Dunk,"	BISHOP.
Song, "Bonny wee wife," Miss Watson	Scottish Melody.

This performance has taken place at so late a period in the month, and just on the eve of our publication going to press, that our remarks must necessarily be quite brief. It will be seen from the bill, that a very good selection of music was made, several of the most popular solo performers were engaged, and in addition, we had a pretty full orchestra, composed in part of the members of the society.

Of Miss Watson, Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Sheppard, and Mr. Herrmann, we have spoken so frequently, that it would be but a repetition of our former remarks to say anything more. We must say, however, of the former young lady, that she appears to be getting more and more into favor (if possible,) with the public, and is encored in almost every song, and some are so unreasonable as to want her to sing them a third time.

Mr. Schubert's solo on the clarinet, and Mr. Schmidt's violin solo, were both very creditable to their abilities as good performers, and afforded their hearers much pleasure, and would have afforded twice as much had they been about half the length they were. Mr. Philipson's solo on the piano had nothing in particular to recommend it.

The Gleees formed a very attractive feature in the evening's performances, and were in general very well sung, by a number of amateur members of the Society; the approbation with which they were received should induce their more frequent repetition hereafter.

The part symphony of Haydn (the first movement of No. 9 of those composed for Salomon's concerts) was by no means well performed; the orchestra was frequently both out of time and out of tune. The Overture was much better.

We reserve the Overtures till the last, because the Euterpean being almost wholly an Instrumental Society, and giving but one Concert a year, we have a right to expect on this occasion something above the common order, something grand in the way of overture or symphony by a grand orchestra—this we did not have; the Concert was a respectable one and nothing more. We ask the gentlemen connected with this Society, in what respect this Concert differed, with the exception of the gleees, from several Concerts given by individuals during the past month? In fact, it did not equal some of them—Mr. Boucher's and Mr. Gambati's for instance. Now, we make these remarks, not out of a captious spirit of fault-finding, for we entertain the best feelings of good will towards this institution and its worthy directors, but because we think an institution possessing the standing and the means of the Euterpean

Society, ought to take higher ground and do more and do better than to give only one performance a year, and that of a mediocre description. The public seldom hear the grand instrumental compositions of Beethoven and other masters, performed by a really good orchestra; this alone affords the Euterpean a fine field for exertion, and one that falls appropriately within the sphere of its action, and we say also, of its duty, as being a Society instituted expressly for the cultivation of instrumental music. But we must drop our remarks for the present by expressing the hope that we shall see the Euterpean display more energy and assume a higher stand than it has yet taken in the musical affairs of this city.

CONCERTS.—Mr. Boucher, leader of the Opera, gave a Concert on the 13th of January, which was full and fashionably attended. Beethoven's symphonia, Eroica, arranged as a septuor, and played by good performers—A Concerto on the violoncello by Mr. Boucher—A Fantasia on the trumpet by Signor Gambati—A Solo by Signor Cioffi on the trombone, with songs by Miss Watson and Madame Maroncelli, formed a very agreeable evening's entertainment.

Mr. H. J. Trust gave a Concert on Friday evening, the 16th instant, at Brooklyn, at which Miss Watson, Mrs. Franklin, Signor Ravaglia and Mr. Sheppard, were the vocalists; and Messrs. Gambati, Kyle, Philipson, and Trust were the instrumental solo performers. The audience was numerous and respectable, and were highly gratified with the performances.

Signor & Signora Maroncelli's Concert took place at the City Hotel on the 22d January. Miss Watson, Signora Maroncelli, and Signor Ravaglia gave some of their best songs. Mr. Aupick performed some fine variations on the horn, Mr. Herrmann on the violoncello, Mr. King played the Grand Fantasia on the national air, Hail, Columbia, on the pianoforte; Signors Gambati and Cioffi also performed concertos. Although the concert appeared to be well attended, still we fear it did not prove a profitable one.

Mr. Gambati's Farewell Concert took place at the City Hotel on the 27th of January. Mr Gambati engaged the flower of the instrumental and vocal talent of the city; and having made a very good selection of music, and being himself a favorite with the public, his concert was the most numerous attended of any given this season; the room was completely filled. Vocal performers—Miss Philips, Miss Watson, Signora Maroncelli, and Signor Ravaglia. Instrumental—Messrs. Cioffi, Trust, Herrmann, Casolani, and Gambati. Mr. Watson presided at the piano.

A splendid vase, which was presented to Mr. Gambati by some of his friends, after the trumpet match at Niblo's last summer, was exhibited between the parts; for what purpose this was done, unless as a piece of humbug we are at a loss to conjecture; as it was publicly exhibited previously at Mr. Atwill's store in Broadway, and at Niblo's. Mr. Gambati denominates this a *Farewell Concert*, as he intends to be absent from the city two or three months.

ORATORIO.—As we announced in our last, the New York Sacred Music Society gave an Oratorio on Thursday evening, Jan. 15th, the object of which was to raise funds towards the erection of a new organ. We are sorry to say, that from various causes, the principal of which were the bad weather, and the number of other amusements on the night in question, the proceeds will be very trifling.

The orchestra, as on the last occasion, embraced the principal talent of the bands of the Italian Opera and Park Theatre, together with many other talented professors and amateurs. The chorus was about 140 to 150 strong, and the vocal and instrumental body combined consisted of about 200 performers. The performance was ably led by Mr. William Penson, of the Park Theatre. The choruses were got up, and were under the direction of Mr. Sage.

PART I.

Overture, to Iphigene,	GLUCK.
Chorus. "Hallelujah to the Father," from the "Mount of Olives."	BEETHOVEN.
Prayer. "In questo altar Concedi," Signora Maroncelli.	MOZART.
Song. "Sweet Bird," Miss Watson, with Obligato Flute Accompaniment by Mr. P. H. Taylor.	
Grand March and Ode. "The Landing of Columbus."	MOZART.
Song. "Laudamus," Mr. Sheppard, with Trombone Obligato Accompaniment by Mr. Cioffi.	CAVAZZA.
Song. "On Mighty Pens," Mrs. Franklin, (Creation.)	HAYDN.
SOLO. Pianoforte. W. A. King. A Grand National Fantasia on the "Star Spangled Banner," with Finale "a la Valse," composed by	W. A. KING.

THE 150TH PSALM, COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR THE SOCIETY, BY W. PENSON.

Chorus and Semi Chorus. "O Praise God in His Holiness." Quartetto, Soli—"Praise Him on the Harp," Miss Watson, Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Sheppard, and a Member.
Harp Solo, Mr. Trust.
Duet, Soli—"Praise him in the Cymbal," &c., Miss Watson and Mrs. Franklin.
Chorus, "Praise Him on the loud Cymbals," &c.
Chorus and Semi Chorus, "Let every thing that hath breath," &c.
Quartetto, Soli—"Let every thing," &c.

PART II.

Overture to Der Freischütz, (by desire.)	VON WEBER.
Prayer. "Deh tu, bell' Angeli," Signora Maroncelli.	HAYDN.
Scena. "The Last Man," Mr. Sheppard,	W. H. CALLCOTT
Chorus. "Father, we adore Thee," from the Oratorio of "Judah."	HAYDN.
Song. "Lord, remember David," Mr. Jones.	HANDEL.
Chorus. "Arise, O Judah."	HAYDN.
Quartetto. "Benedictus," Miss Watson, Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Sheppard, and a Member of the Society. (Requiem.)	MOZART.
Chorus. "Now elevate the Sign of Judah."	HAYDN.
Recit. { "Deeper and deeper still," } Mr. Jones.	HANDEL.
& Air. { "Waft her, Angels," }	
Recit. { "Ye sacred Priests," }	
& Air. { "Farewell, ye limpid streams," Miss Watson.	HANDEL.
Chorus. "The Arm of the Lord is upon them."	HAYDN.

The pieces of Signora Maroncelli were fine compositions, and new to the principal part of the audience; she sang with much taste and judgment. Miss Watson and Mr. Taylor received great applause in the song, "Sweet Bird." We would advise the audience, in all cases, to restrain their tokens of approbation until the conclusion of the symphony; it is a mark of respect due to the gentlemen of the orchestra which should never be violated. On this evening the audience, by their premature applause, deprived themselves of a most beautiful cadenza, by Mr. Taylor, which we have no doubt would have been highly gratifying to them had they heard it.

We are glad to bear our testimony to the improvement making by Mr. Sheppard; he is becoming rapidly, what has been much wanted in this city—a good bass concert

singer. The song, *Laudamus*, accompanied by Cioffi's trombone, is a musical treat of a highly gratifying kind. Calcott's fine song, "The Last Man," was also sung in good style, and was highly creditable to Mr. Sheppard, though to give it full effect, it requires a voice of more power than Mr. S. at present possesses. Mrs. Franklin sang "On mighty pens" in her usual neat and chaste style. The "Benedictus" was very indifferently sung, (it was not rehearsed.) Mr. Jones possesses one of the most beautiful tenor voices in the country, and it is always a pleasure to hear him; still, we think we have heard him on previous occasions sing both his songs better than he did on this evening. "Farewell, ye limpid streams, &c." was sung by Miss Watson in a very chaste manner, and with much feeling. The pianoforte concerto was highly creditable to Mr. King's talents, both as a pianist and musician.

The choruses were in general well performed, although the effect of some of those in the second part was much injured by the movement being taken in a different time by the leader of the orchestra from that in which they were usually sung.

As it is only at these performances where the combined strength of a powerful chorus and a powerful instrumental orchestra can be heard, we are much indebted to this society for the means of enjoying those grand choruses which flow upon the ear in a delicious and powerful stream of blended melody and harmony.

It is delightful to hear (and to see forty handsome girls, "clad in robes of virgin white,") the *soprani* of this society, so pure, so rich and powerful in tone, and correct in time and execution. The bass has always been powerful and good. The tenor has of late improved greatly; but the alto is quite unequal in power to the rest of the parts.

Highly as we are disposed to think, and as we do think, of what has been done, and of what is doing by this society; yet, much remains for them to accomplish. The perfection of choral performance is very far from being attained; much more can be accomplished by the undiminished zeal of the members; punctual attendance at the practising meetings is the most obvious mode of attaining greater perfection in performance. Those lukewarm members who only attend now and then, and who drop into the ranks just at the eve of a performance, are worse than useless to the society; they are a positive injury, by marring the efforts of the others; and the directors do not do their duty if they permit one single individual to play this game for one instant after the fact becomes known to them.

THE 150TH PSALM.—The novelty of the evening was the production of an original composition, the 150th Psalm, by Mr. W. Penson. This psalm affords to a composer ample scope for various and powerful effects. When it is considered that the composition of Mr. Penson had to pass a severe comparative ordeal—it being performed on the same evening with the gigantic productions of the greatest German composers—and that it was produced at a very brief notice, and without that degree of practice necessary to familiarize the performers with the work, and render them capable to give full and complete effect to his intentions, it is no mean encomium upon the composition to say that it was exceedingly well received, and under the circumstances, well performed. We are obliged to defer until a future number an elaborate and scientific account of this production, with which we have been furnished by a friend. This piece, and the immortal Weber's Overture to *Der Freyschütz*, were the most perfect orchestral performances of the evening.

REVIEW OF MUSIC.

THE BONNIE WEE WIFE, Introduction and Rondo by W. A. KING. New York; Firth & Hall.

This arrangement is exceedingly creditable to Mr. K. It is in good taste, the passages lay well for the hand of a pianoforte student, and at the same time are well calculated to give equality to the weaker fingers. We would have preferred a change of treatment after the return to the subject for the last time; still it is a valuable addition to the already voluminous stock of rondos.

THE MELLOW HORN, Introduction and Rondo by W. A. KING. New York; Firth & Hall.

Similar remarks may justly enough be extended to this piece. At page 3d, 3d line, we presume that F# is required against the bass G#; and again, 8th page, 1st bar, 4th line, E# and D#, instead of D# and E#; at 7th page, two first bars of second line, the lower bass A B is printed by mistake, as indeed seem to be the previous errors.

THE EVENING SERENADE, Song, composed by W. A. KING. Firth & Hall.

We cannot award the same meed of approbation to Mr. K's vocal efforts, as to his instrumental; the melody of this song is constrained and florid, and seems to have been more of an effort, to which he is comparatively a stranger. Time and practice will doubtless improve his perception of what forms the more valuable attributes for vocal composition.

THE AMERICAN LILY, Song, Miss M. L. GIBSON. J. F. Atwill.

This melody has not the merit of being either original or graceful, and the errors of harmony are by no means calculated to redeem that fault. In the last bar but one of the symphony, an introduction to the song, there appears a chord, for which it is by no means easy to account; perhaps the addition of a natural to the A might amend the present arrangement. At bar first of fourth line, in the right hand we have G E C E, making an interval of a tenth; G would have been preferable. First bar of last line, contains, at last chord, A B C F! and in the following bar, we have a fifth in the second treble and tenor, viz.—A E and B F! Some other little mal-arrangements would appear to convey to the really musical, that the composer has not made much progress, even in the rudiments of the musical grammar.

BY THE MARGIN OF FAIR ZURICH'S WATERS, Air (à la Suisse,) sung by Miss S. PHILLIPS. Atwill.

BY THE MARGIN OF FAIR ZURICH'S WATERS, Song (à la Suisse,) as sung by Miss WATSON. Composed by ALEX. LEE, and arranged, with Symphonies and Accompaniments, by J. WATSON.

It will thus be seen that two copies of this song have appeared almost simultaneously; the publishers most probably being entirely unaware of each other's intention respecting it. The circumstance, however, has led to some little newspaper altercation respecting the genuineness of the respective editions.

As Mr. Atwill published his edition from the London copy, and as Mr. Watson states in his letter respecting that published by Messrs. Firth & Hall, that he learned the song by hearing his daughter sing it, and acknowledges that he never saw a copy until that published by Atwill,

he is evidently mistaken in ascribing the composition to Alexander Lee. The title of the London copy runs thus—"By the Margin of fair Zurich's Waters, Air (à la Suisse,) sung with the greatest applause by Madame Vestris, in Mr. Charles Dance's burletta of 'The Beulah Spa;' the symphonies and accompaniments by Miss Louisa Sophia Dance."

The term *à la Suisse*, would lead us to suppose that it was written in imitation of the Swiss style of melodies; but then, Miss Dance only claims the symphonies and accompaniments, and this appears to imply what we suspect to be the fact, that the air is a "Swiss melody," and not *à la Suisse*. As Mr. C. Dance has obtained a copyright for the song, in London, it seems to settle the question as far as regards Mr. Lee being the composer.

The song is very pretty, and quite popular.

A NEW AND IMPROVED METHOD FOR PLAYING THE SPANISH GUITAR, by OTTO TORP.

A well digested and excellent compendium for a new, fashionable, and easily portable accompaniment of the voice; and although we cannot possibly believe in the almost miraculous powers and qualities which Mr. Torp attributes to the *Spanish*, or indeed any other *Guitar* whatever, viz.—"as an accompaniment to the voice, as a means *enhancing its perfections and concealing its defects*, the *Guitar* is probably without a rival!" still, we are most willing to testify to its merits as a pretty and useful instrument. The work is well calculated for the acquirement of a competent knowledge of its capabilities, and merits the unqualified approbation of the lovers of music generally, and the admirers and students of the *Guitar*, in a most especial manner. The manual of rudiments is at once clear, comprehensive and explicit. Its almost imperceptibly progressive qualities are evident, and may assure the student of even moderate industry, a rationally speedy attainment of the end of his desires. Independently of the merits of this book as a *vade mecum* of music's rudiments and *Spanish Guitar* attainment, the judicious, and at the same time popular, collection of *Airs and Songs* attached to it, and of no less a number than *twenty-four*, ought alone to ensure the book a most extensive sale.

REMARKS

ON THE MUSIC PUBLISHED IN THIS WORK.

[No. I.]

"*If Guiltless Blood*," from the Oratorio of Susannah, composed by Handel, in 1774. This fine song was heard, we believe for the first time in public, in this city, at an Oratorio given in April last, by the New York Sacred Music Society. In our account of that performance, we described the strong sensation of delight it produced in the audience by the highly effective manner in which it was sung by that celebrated vocalist, Mrs. Wood. The performance of this song very forcibly impressed us with the justness of the following observations from the "Elements of Vocal Science":—

"Handel was a composer of great majesty and strength; even his elegance partakes of sublimity. His style is the great style, and is simple in the degree which contributes most to this end. From a singer he requires more legitimate and genuine expression than any other master. In the hands of a common performer, Handel's best pieces are

heavy and fatiguing; when we hear them from one who is alive to his subject, and whose expression is at all equal to the task, they awaken the noblest and best feelings of humanity. They produce in us a reverential awe for the power which they celebrate, while they elevate the soul into adoration and thanksgiving."

There is in this extract matter for much useful reflection to those amateurs who occasionally sing in public.

It is no doubt very true, that in the hands of a tame and common performer, this song would appear to be very indifferent; yet no one, we presume to say, who heard it sung by Mrs. Wood, can forget the effect given to it by her great power, pathos, and expression.

It frequently happens, that we hear young ladies attempt to sing "Angels ever bright and fair," "Let the bright Seraphim," "Sweet Bird," and some go so far as to sing "Rejoice greatly," and other songs of this class; because they happen to be favorites with the public when sung by professional singers. These difficult songs being beyond the powers of the class of persons alluded to, are generally imperfectly executed, and are also frequently disfigured by false ornament; in the adding of which, the singers imagine that they are displaying their taste, &c., when in fact they are publicly exposing their want of it.

A few considerations will place the impropriety of such selections in its proper light.

Amateurs should reflect that when they come before the public in songs of this class, they place themselves in a position in which a comparison with professional singers of eminence is unavoidable; and that this comparison must in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred result to their disadvantage. A fine song, badly sung, gives pain in proportion to the excellence with which we have been accustomed to hear it; and, we have before remarked, that as it requires something besides a good voice to make a good singer; therefore, amateurs should be very careful not to attempt songs of so much difficulty. Public singers are particularly cautious on this subject of comparison, and when one singer has gained a reputation in a certain line of songs, another is careful not to sing them on this very account. This, as a general remark, is correct; but the contrary often happens, where a confidence in their own powers induces a spirit of competition and rivalry.

We by no means wish to be understood as discouraging young ladies from endeavoring to sing these songs; on the contrary, they form excellent studies for private practice, and our remarks are entirely aimed at the impropriety of coming prematurely in them before the public. It should be a maxim with them to do *well* whatever they undertake to do; and singing a simple song well will gain them infinitely more credit, and will give more pleasure to their hearers, than to hear them attempt difficulties which they cannot master; and which give rise to unfavorable comparisons, and causes regret that such injudicious selections should be made.

"*Ah! non lasciarmi nò.*"—We know not the author of the words, and it matters little who wrote them; but the air is one of the happiest effusions of the composer,—

BONIFAZIO ASIOLI,

born at Correggio in 1769, and during many years director of the conservatorio at Milan. He was much esteemed by Buonaparte, who, as King of Italy, appointed him his *Maitre de Musique de Chappelle*, &c. He composed several canzonets, nocturni, fantasias, &c., all displaying a refined taste, but not much energy. He also published two very sensible, useful treatises, and was one of the most able and intelligent teachers of his day. He died, if we mistake not, about the year 1830.—*Sup. Mus. Lib.*

"*Come, l'aurette, placide,*"—This is one of the beautiful airs culled from Rossini's different operas, to make up the English opera of Cinderella.

No. II.

Alpine Melody, composed by Fischer. This beautiful waltz forms a *theme* on which Czerny has composed some difficult variations.

"*Here's a health to those far away.*"—This song is taken from the *Harmonicon*, the editors of which, in a note, remark—

"This most pathetic Air was set, very unaptly, to a Jacobite song, which Mr. Hogg has given in his laborious and interesting work, the *Jacobite Relics*. From a note in this work we gather, that the present words were altered from the original by Allan Ramsay; but we cannot find them in our copy of his songs."

This song has been published before in this country, we believe, to different words; but it is scarce, and its merit entitles it to a more extensive circulation, and to the attention of the amateurs who patronise the Musical Journal.

Glee, "*Once upon my cheek,*" Dr. Callcott. In pursuance of our design of furnishing our readers with a series of the best classical glees for the convenience and amusement of social parties, we now present them with one of the numerous compositions of this class, by that very celebrated glee writer, Dr. Callcott; in the selection of which, we have been principally influenced by the arrangement of it for a first and second treble, which will render it more generally useful than those written wholly for men's voices. We have transposed the tenor from the tenor cliff to the treble, as the former is but little known to our amateurs.

"A glee implies nothing more in its original sense, in our printed music books, than 'a song of three or more parts, upon a gay or merry subject, in which all the voices begin and end together, singing the same words.' When subjects of fugue or imitation occur, and the composition is more artificial than simple counterpoint, it less resembles a glee than a madrigal, which it might with more propriety be called, if the words were serious; for a serious glee seems a solecism, and a direct contradiction in terms. The word *Glee* in Saxon, German, and English Dictionaries, ancient and modern, implies *mirth, merriment*, and in old authors, *music itself*."—*Burney*.

No. III.

"*My Silvia wears a rosy wreath,*" composed by J. Parry. The Catch is an ingenious species of musical composition, and when well performed, highly amusing.

"Among vocal productions for the chamber, and for social purposes, must not be forgotten canons, rounds, and

catches; of which ingenious and exhilarating species of composition, the first collection that ever was printed, appeared during this reign,* under the title of 'Pammelia, Musick's Miscellanie; or mixed varietie of pleasant Round-elsays and delightful Catches of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 parts in one. None so ordinarie as musical, none so musical as not to all very pleasing and acceptable. London, printed by William Barley, for R. B. and H. W., and are to be sold at the spread eagle at the north doore of Paules,' quarto, 1609. The names of none of the composers of these epigrammatic and pointed effusions have been preserved; but many of them seem of great antiquity, which is discoverable both by the words and style of composition. Great musical science is manifested in the canons, and the harmony and contrivance of the rest are excellent. The words, indeed, except those of the canons, which consist of small portions of the Psalms, and other parts of Scripture, in Latin (which seems to imply that they were set before the Reformation,) are, in general, devoid of wit, humor, poetry, and common sense. It has been before observed, in the course of this work, that our lyric poetry, during the sixteenth and part of the seventeenth century, was in a barbarous state, and far inferior to the music of the times. But the composers seemed so little solicitous about the words they had to set, as frequently to prefer the syllables of sol-misation, Ut re mi fa sol la; Hey down down, derry down; or merely Fal la, to songs of Spenser and Shakspeare.

"Canons, rounds, and catches were never published in score till after the institution of the present Catch Club in 1762; and, therefore, one line often contained the whole composition; the places where the several parts were to begin being indicated by signs or numbers. A round is sometimes called a canon in the unison, and sometimes, but erroneously, a Catch; but it is distinct from both; being no more than a song of as many strains, or sections, as parts; which, instead of being begun together, are performed after each other, always singing different words and different notes in harmony with the rest; till a signal is given, by holding up the hand, for finishing upon the perfect chord of the key note, where the author has placed this final mark, ♫. A catch is sung in the same manner as a round, the second performer beginning the first strain, when the leader begins the second; however, in the course of the performance, some latent meaning or humor is produced by the manner in which the composer has arranged the words for singing, which would not appear in perusing them."—Burney.

"*Turn, Amarillis, to thy Swain.*"—This glee was written in 1640, by Thomas Brewer, a violist and composer of fancies in Charles the First's time. It was first published in London, in 1667, by John Playford, in an excellent collection of *Rounds, Catches, Dialogues, Gleees, Ayres, and Ballads*, entitled "Catch that catch can; or the Musical Companion." Dr. Burney, in his history, pronounces it to be a composition of a superior kind. We are indebted for a copy of it to F. H. F. Berkeley, Esq., of this city. We are not aware that it has been published before in this country.

"*Blessed be thou, the God of Israel.*"—This Quartetto is taken from the serious opera of "Enea nel Lazio," composed by Righini, for Frederic William II., and performed at the great Opera House at Berlin, in 1793.

* James the First.

The beauty of the harmony and the solemnity of the general expression impressed us with its fitness for the services of the sanctuary, and induced us to adapt these words to it, and thus to add this beautiful piece to the catalogue of those which have been already transferred from the theatre to the church. In order, however, that our readers may have it in its original state if they prefer it, we insert the Italian words, together with a translation, for all of which we are indebted to the Harmonicon.

[ITALIAN WORDS.]

Gia co' mirti infra gli allori,
Serto intreccia Amor per voi;
E gli ulivi ai mirti suoi
Vien la Pace ad intrecciar.

[VERSIFIED TO SUIT THE METRE.]

Myrtles sweet with laurels twining,
Love enwreathes a crown for thee;
And sweet Peace her olives joining,
Bids the union perfect be.

"VINCENZO RIGHINI,

a Bolognese, born about the year 1758, was a disciple of the Padre Martini, and first appeared at Prague, as a singer. In 1779, he was appointed Kapellmeister to the Italian Opera at Vienna. In 1788, he filled the same office at Mentz, where he wrote several operas. In 1792, he was invited to Berlin by the King, and produced the above work, which obtained for him appointments worth 4000 thalers (620*l.*) per annum. He died at Bologna, whither he had proceeded in order to undergo a surgical operation, in 1812. Righini composed many Italian operas, but not one of them has ever been heard in this country; though, if produced, they would show that much excellent music is suffered to remain unknown, while downright trash, under the pretence of being new, is brought forward and applauded."—S. M. L.

"*The Favorite March from Mosé.*"—This march has been rendered extremely popular during the past season in this city, by the beautiful manner in which it was performed on the trumpet by Signor Gambati. The beauty and simplicity of its melody is such as must render it a lasting favorite. We present our readers with an arrangement of it for the flute and pianoforte, from a French copy, for which we are indebted to the politeness of Mr. P. H. Taylor, and which we believe is the first time it has been published in this country.

Moise in Egitto was written by Rossini, and first performed in Naples, about the year 1817, and was entitled an oratorio. It was performed a few times in this city, under this title, by the late opera company under Signor Montresor, in the winter of 1832-3. It is characterized, however, by very little of the majesty or dignity of the sacred drama; and it is now commonly performed as an opera at the theatres in Europe. It sometimes appears under the title of "Pietro l'Eremito."

ERRATA.—No. 1. Music, page 1, staff 7, bar 2, the last note should be F on the top line, instead of D. Page 6, staff 5, bar 1, the tenth note in this bar should be B instead of C: in the next bar the fourth note should be C instead of A, and in the same bar the tenth note C has been omitted. Page 7, staff 8, bar 3, and staff 11, bar 3, in both places the same passages occur; an additional appoggiatura on A and an E, so as to form the chord E G, should be inserted in the beginning of each bar. These corrections can be pencilled.

No. 2. Page 43, col. 1, line 22, for 'Ilia' read 'Nisa.' Page 44, col. 1, line 19 from bottom, for 'mostra, read 'nostra.' Page 47, col. 1, line 13, for 'containing,' read 'continuing.'